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THOMAS JACKSON.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

No species of literary composition excites a deeper interest, or is more generally acceptable, than biography. Exhibiting, as it does, not only the outward conduct of men, but the principles and feelings by which they are actuated, under all the diversified circumstances of life, and in the prospect of a future state, it possesses a charm of which every mind is sensible. It gratifies a laudable curiosity, and it ministers to our instruction.

Of all the different kinds of biography, that which is usually denominated religious, is, beyond comparison, the most important. By describing the origin, the progress, and the results of personal godliness, it shows us the manner in which we also may acquire and practise the holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. Here we see the doctrines of Christianity exemplified and embodied in the experi-

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With these views it is proposed to publish a series of volumes under the general title of "A Library of Christian Biography." The lives which it will comprehend, will mostly consist of abridgments of larger works, some of which are scarce and little known. They will be selected from the different sections of the Christian church, both domestic and foreign. The subjects which will be successively presented to the reader, will be Ministers and laymen; some of them eminent for their rank, talents, and scholarship; others less distinguished; but all demonstrating, both in life and death, the truth and power of Christian principle. Nothing properly sectarian will be admitted into any of the

volumes; which will be especially adapted to the use of private families and individuals, and to the libraries of Sunday-schools. The work may be expected to contain a considerable portion of historical information, both civil and ecclesiastical. The extent to which it will be carried, will, of course, greatly depend upon the patronage with which it may be honoured; but each volume, which will comprise one or more lives, will be complete in itself, and sold separately for the accommodation of those who do not choose to purchase the whole. A volume will be generally published every two months, or oftener, as the Editor may be able to prepare them, and conduct them through the press.

London, May 31*st*, 1837.

THE LIFE

OF

ISAAC WATTS, D.D.

CHIEFLY ABRIDGED FROM THE "MEMOIRS" OF DR. GIBBONS.

THE LIFE

OF

ISAAC WATTS, D.D.

CHAPTER I.

Dr. Isaac Watts was born at Southampton, July 17th, 1674. His father, Mr. Isaac Watts, was the master of a very flourishing boarding-school in that town, which was in such reputation that gentlemen's sons were sent to it from America and the West Indies for education. He was a most pious, exemplary Christian, and honourable Deacon of the church of Protestant Dissenters in that place. He was imprisoned more than once for his nonconformity, and during his confinement his wife has been known to sit on a stone near the prison-door suckling her son Isaac. It is reported of him that, while he was very young, before he could speak plain, when he had any money given him, he would say to his mother, "A book, a book, buy a book." He began to learn Latin at four years old; and in the

knowledge of that language, as well as in Greek, he made such a swift progress under the care of the Rev. Mr. Pinhorne, a Clergyman of the Establishment, that he became the delight of his friends, and the admiration of the neighbourhood. He studied Hebrew also under the same master. "The Doctor was early taken notice of," says Dr. Jennings, "for his sprightliness and vivacity,—talents which too often prove fatal snares to young persons; but, through the power of divine grace, he was not only preserved from criminal follies, but had a deep sense of religion upon his heart betimes." As proofs, the one of his uncommon genius, and the other of his powerful impressions of piety, I will mention two particulars concerning him, communicated to me by his sister, Mrs. Sarah Brackstone. When he was only about seven or eight years old he was desired by his mother to write her some lines, as was the custom with the other boys after the school-hours were over, for which she used to reward them with a farthing. The Doctor obeyed, and presented her with the following couplet:—

> "I write not for a farthing, but to try
> How I your farthing writers can outvie."

About the same time of life he composed a copy of verses, which falling into the hands of his mother, she, upon reading them, expressed her doubts whether he was the author of them. To

satisfy her what he was able to perform in poetry, he wrote the following acrostic upon his own name :—

I am a vile polluted lump of earth,
S o I've continued ever since my birth,
A lthough Jehovah grace does daily give me,
A s sure this monster Satan will deceive me ;
C ome therefore, Lord, from Satan's claws relieve me.
W ash me in thy blood, O Christ,
A nd grace divine impart,
T hen search and try the corners of my heart,
T hat I in all things may be fit to do
S ervice to thee, and sing thy praises too.

It is said that, while the Doctor was a youth, Dr. John Speed, a physician, and some other gentlemen at Southampton, observing his genius, and being willing to encourage it, offered to be at the charge of his education at one of our English Universities; but that he declined the proposal, saying, that he was determined to take his lot among the Dissenters. Accordingly, in the year 1690, he was sent to London for academical education under the Rev. Thomas Rowe; and in 1693, in his nineteenth year, he joined in communion with the church under the pastoral care of his tutor. I have heard the Doctor speak with great honour of Mr. Rowe ; and there is an ode addressed to him in his "Lyric Poems," which breathes the high esteem and affection he had for him. "I have been credibly informed,"

says Dr. Jennings, "that, while he resided in this college of learning, his behaviour was not only so inoffensive that his tutor declared he never gave him any occasion of reproof, but so exemplary that he often proposed him as a pattern for his other pupils for imitation." No doubt can reasonably be made, that the Doctor diligently applied himself to his studies, when it is recollected what a strong inclination he discovered to literature from his earliest age, and what treasures of knowledge and erudition he opened to the world not many years after his academical education was completed. But to put the matter beyond all question, I will state that a manuscript volume, in his own hand, was given me by his brother, Mr. Enoch Watts, which contains no less than twenty-two Latin dissertations, which were evidently his college-exercises. The subjects may be ranged under the articles of physical, metaphysical, ethical, and theological. The following is a translation of the dissertation on the immateriality of the human soul:—

"Very surprising and no less pernicious are, I know not whether I should not call them, those dreams of some philosophers who maintain that the mind of man is material, as the flagrant absurdities and mischiefs of such a notion must strike even the most hasty observer, some of which we may point out before we close our discourse.

"Previous to our entrance upon our subject, it

is proper we should settle our terms, lest, like as enemies brought over to our side may fall out with one another, our words should clash, at the same time that there is an agreement among the things themselves.

"By 'the mind of man' I understand that cogitation which every one feels within himself; or, to express myself more clearly, that internal principle of all our thoughts, of our desires, and of our volitions; to which we owe all those operations in which any degree of thought is concerned, or that principle which, as in its prime subject, includes all our thoughts.

"We shall next attend to our predicate. I call all that immaterial which is not extended, that which has not parts annexed to parts; for whatever has the dimension of length, breadth, and thickness is properly denominated matter in the opinion of the best philosophers.

"Having opened our way, we now enter into the field. But what a numerous and formidable host immediately appears in array against us! First Epicurus, then Tertullian, next Hobbes and his followers oppose me,—Greeks, Barbarians, Pagans, and some, though but a few, professors of the true religion. Some will not admit that the mind of man is immaterial, lest the consequence should press them that it is immortal; and that they may have no check upon them in their course of sin, they exclude from the human soul

the idea of immateriality. Others adopt the error that they may by it support their mistaken notions in religion. And a third sort, through ignorance, prejudices, and inconsideration, do not with sufficient accuracy draw the line between mind and matter.

"We shall now consider what arguments may be alleged in proof of our proposition, that the mind of man is immaterial. I have selected the following reasons out of many that might be adduced:—

"1. If the body is capable of thinking, thought is a mode of body, and depends either upon the position of its parts, or upon motion. But what is that position of parts which thinks? What is its figure? Does it consist of three or four angles? Or, if thinking depends upon motion, let me ask, what is that motion? I know of no motion but what is local; and if this is thinking, then whenever a body moves, it thinks. But these are mere bubbles, which instantly dissolve before the breath of reason.

"2. Body or matter, according to philosophers, is a passive principle; but who is there can deny but thinking is an action, and more especially that kind of it which is called volition? You may perhaps reply, 'that matter is inert, but that there is a spiritual extension which is active.' To which I answer, that it must be in a manner different from that of reasoning, by which your error should

be combated, that of distinguishing between extension and matter.

"3. If body can think, thinking must be either an essential or an accidental mode. It cannot be an essential mode; for, if it were, it would be inseparable, and all bodies would think. It cannot be an accidental mode, because we can have no conception of an accident—no, not even upon the most refined abstraction—without a subject; otherwise an accident would be conceived of without its essence, when its very being is an in-being in that essence. Now try, my adversary, I address myself to you, whether you cannot think of your will, of the power of determining yourself, of joy, of love, and your other affections, without any idea of any thing extended? You can undoubtedly: conclude, then, that thought is not an accident of body.

"4. That is an essential, primary attribute of a thing,—and which indeed constitutes it,—which may be conceived of without other properties, at the same time that other properties cannot be conceived of without an idea of that attribute. Thinking and extension considered in this manner agree the one to spirit, the other to body; nor does either the one or the other pre-suppose any thing besides in which it should be founded; thinking and extension, therefore, are essential attributes of two particular kinds of beings, which are at the greatest remove from each other. Not, then, till

these two essences constitute one simple being shall I believe that thinking belongs to matter.

"5. The last and grand argument, to which all lovers of truth will yield their assent, may be thus represented. It is an axiom that universally prevails in philosophy, that an essence may be known by its operations; or, in other words, as are the operations, such are the subjects. Now the operations of our minds are knowledge, doubting, affection, and the like. But what connexion has extension with knowledge? Knowledge, unquestionably, has neither length, breadth, nor thickness. If, therefore, judgment or volition is immaterial, its subject is immaterial too. The body is incapable of exerting such acts; for it would then go beyond the sphere of its power, and the effect would be more excellent than its cause.

"Let these arguments suffice; and to me they appear sufficient to satisfy any mind that will not obstinately adhere to its opinion against the force of reason. If any person, after all that has been alleged, should still insist upon it that his own mind is material, I shall have no objection to his turning out among the animals which graze the fields, as he is utterly unworthy the society of philosophers, and indeed of mankind."

Besides the Latin theses in the volume above mentioned, of which we have given this specimen, there are also inserted two English dissertations: the first made, as the Doctor prefixes it,

"for our meeting together" (meaning, undoubtedly, the students of the academy) "on Saturday in July, 1693," and the other "for our meeting together on Saturday, Sept. 9th, 1693." These dissertations have considerable merit, and show the Doctor's diligence in the improvement of his time, and of his intercourse with his fellow-students.

Mr. Enoch Watts also gave me several manuscript volumes of his brother, some of which I parted with several years since as curiosities to particular persons. What were the subjects of the volumes I have given away I cannot recollect, only that one of them, I believe, was an abridgment of Mr. Gale's learned work, called "The Court of the Gentiles." Two only of the number which Mr. Watts was so kind to present me are still in my hands; one of which is entitled, "*Quæstiones Logicæ ut plurimùm desumptæ ex Burgersdicii Institutionibus, et Hereboordii Commentariis*, 1691, 1692;" * and the other, "*Sententiolæ quædam è Tractatu Lud. de la Forge de mente humanâ collectæ, aut potius Epitome ejusdem Tractatûs*, 1691." † Neither of the volumes is very small, and must have cost

* In English, "Logical Questions collected for the greatest part from Burgersdicius's Institutions, and Heereboord's Commentaries."

† "Some brief Opinions collected from the Treatise of Lewis de la Forge concerning the human Mind; or rather, an Epitome of the Work."

the Doctor considerable pains and patience, if any thing might be called pains and patience to him in his pleasurable pursuit of learning. He had a happy method of acquiring knowledge, by abridging scientific works. By this means he made himself master of the subject before him, whatever it was; drew it into a small compass, and imprinted it on his memory. Twenty volumes upon logic, pneumatology, ethics, &c., swiftly run over, and without any endeavours thus to exhaust and fix them upon the mind, might not yield the twentieth part of real improvement as would one volume thus perused, arranged, and treasured in the memory. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Doctor recommends the like practice to others in such strong language. "Shall I be so free," says he, "as to assure my younger friends, from my own experience, that these methods of reading will cost some pains in the first years of your study, and especially in the first authors you peruse in any science, or on any particular subject? But the profit will richly compensate the pains; and in the following years of life, after you have read a few valuable books on any special subject in this manner, it will be very easy to read others of the same kind, because you will not find very much new matter in them which you have not already examined."*

* "Improvement of the Mind," part 1, chap. iv., sec. 7.

There was another method also which the Doctor adopted, it may be in the time of his preparatory studies, though of this we are not able to furnish positive evidence, but of which there are the fullest proofs in his further progress in life; namely, that of interleaving the works of authors, and inserting in the blank pages additions from other writers on the same subject. I have now by me, the gift of his brother Mr. Enoch Watts, the Westminster Greek Grammar thus interleaved by the Doctor, with all that he thought proper to collect from Dr. Busby's and Mr. Leeds's Greek Grammars, ingrafted by him into the supplemental leaves; and I have besides in my possession, a present from the Doctor himself, a printed discourse by a considerable writer on a controverted point in divinity, interleaved in the same manner, and much enlarged by insertions in the Doctor's own hand.

Such were the happy, though laborious, methods this eminent man took to possess himself of knowledge. He was not contented with superficial glances and hasty surveys. He searched deep for the mines of wisdom, and spared no pains to discover them, and enrich himself with their treasures.

CHAPTER II.

WHILE he was thus laborious in the acquisition of knowledge, the Doctor was not inattentive to poetic composition. He tells us that he had amused himself with verse from fifteen years old to fifty ; * and during the time of his studies, or in a very short space after he had closed them, he wrote several poems, and no inconsiderable number of his lyric odes. The pieces which were composed by him at this period are the poem called " Light in Darkness ;" his verses to Mr. Josiah Hort, afterwards Archbishop of Tuam in Ireland ; his ode entitled, " *Excitatio Cordis ad Cœlum ;*" his two epistles, the one to his brother Richard, and the other to his brother Enoch ; and his ode addressed to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The four last are written in Latin.

The epistle to his brother, Mr. Enoch Watts, bears date September 30th, 1691, and may be translated as follows :—

TO MY BROTHER ENOCH WATTS, GOING A VOYAGE.

BROTHER, may Heaven vouchsafe to bless,
And crown your voyage with success !
Go, in the planks of pine immured,
And from surrounding harms secured :

* " Miscellaneous Thoughts," No. 65.

Go, and, with sails expanding wide,
With pleasure plough the placid tide;
In safety wafted o'er the main,
In safety wafted home again.
O may no monster of the flood,
That roams for prey, and thirsts for blood,
Seize you to his tremendous power,
And with remorseless jaws devour,
While the bark shiver'd by the blast
Strows with its wreck the watery waste!
My brother trusted to thy care,
Half of myself, O vessel, bear
Secure through ocean's wide domain,
At best a desert, trackless plain;
And oft, when hurricanes arise,
In billows thundering to the skies,
Safe from the sand's devouring heap,
May'st thou thy wary passage keep;
Safe too from each tremendous rock,
Where ships are shatter'd by the shock:
May only favourable gales
Attend thy course, and fill thy sails;
And may the zephyr's softest wing
Thee to thy port serenely bring!
Thou, who dost o'er the seas preside,
Rouse them to rage, or smooth their tide,
Thou, who dost in thy fetters keep
The boisterous tyrants of the deep,
To foreign climes secure convey
My brother through the watery way,
And back conduct him o'er the main
To his dear shores and friends again!

The Doctor's Latin ode addressed to himself may be thus translated:—

THE EXCITATION OF THE HEART TOWARDS HEAVEN.

WHAT, shall whole ages wear away,
And I a willing prisoner stay,
Immured within these walls of clay?

The porch, the open door I see:
Shall both conspire to set me free,
And I start back from liberty?

Shall I not pant to' ascend the road
That leads to yon sublime abode,
The palace of my Father, God?

From this vile flesh what countless ills
Arise? Now fear my bosom chills,
Now grief in trickling tears distils;

While sin, the worst of all my foes,
Prevents or murders my repose,
And snares of dark destruction strows.

On this poor spot where canst thou find
Pleasures of such exalted kind
To fill the wishes of the mind?

Jesus, thy love, far, far from sight,
'Midst stars and seraphs pure and bright,
Dwells high-enthroned in worlds of light.

Thither shouldst thou attempt to go,
The' Almighty would no thunders throw,
Nor would one cloud obscure his brow;

Himself invites thee to the skies:
From sin and all its sorrows rise;
Wings of swift flame his love supplies.

The ode "to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" may perhaps vie in the merit of its com-

position with any of the lyric performances of the Greek and Latin writers. A most astonishing energy animates, I may truly say, every line, and evinces the uncommon poetic powers which the Doctor possessed. It is thus rendered into English :—

THEE, Jesus, in whose person join
The human nature and divine,
The' all-glorious Sire's all-glorious Son
Ere worlds were form'd or time begun,
Thee will I praise ; thy name adored
Shall consecrate the tuneful chord :
My tongue thy glories shall proclaim,
And my pen propagate thy fame.
Let strings of sounds divinely bold
Be fitted to the vocal gold.
And thou, my harp, awake and tell
The triumphs of Immanuel.
How, in the thunder of his might,
He put the' infernal hosts to flight,
In fetters bound their vanquish'd king,
Trampled on death, and crush'd his sting.
Ages immense through heaven had roll'd
Their ample rounds of radiant gold,
While in the realms of endless day
He in the Father's bosom lay,
Of his unbounded love possess'd,
With joys immeasurable bless'd,
Till from the' empyreal heights he saw
Adam transgress his Maker's law,
And hell expand its lake of fire
To' ingulf the offspring with their sire ;
Saw, too, the' avenging angel stand,
Swords and keen lightnings in his hand,

And arrows ranged in dire array
Athirst for blood, and wing'd to slay;
Then heard from the abhorr'd profound
The monsters of the pit resound
Their joys, that man from God was driven,
And earth to hell's dominion given:
Compassion not to be express'd,
Like a swift flame, pervades his breast;
To help, to save, almighty ire
And love dimensionless conspire:—
"Not the whole race of men shall be
Plunged in eternal misery:
What, shall my Father's work divine,
Where his refulgent beauties shine,
Perish by hellish fraud and spite?
Rather let all the stars of light
Be from their glorious stations hurl'd,
And night and chaos whelm the world:
I 'll enter Satan's dark domain,
And bind the felon in my chain,
Or he shall chase me from the field,
And I 'll to him my sceptre yield.
By my Sire's glories, and by mine,
Alike immortal and divine,
I swear." He said, and bows the skies,
And to our world impatient flies.
The Prince of heaven without delay
Assumes an humble form of clay;
Though scant the room, and poor the' abode,
Yet honour'd to admit the God!
Thus he displays his wondrous grace,
Thus he redeems our ruin'd race,
Vengeance' full quiver he receives,
And for our own his life he gives.
O the distress! the' effects how dire
Of the offended Thunderer's ire!

Edict severe! what punishment
For Adam's one transgression sent!
He tastes the interdicted tree,
And death sweeps o'er his progeny.
But check, my Muse, thy plaintive lay;
Whither do thy wild pinions stray?
Suppress these sighs, these groans restrain:
What, shall a flood of tears profane
The triumphs of Immanuel's tomb?
Rather a joyful strain assume,
And in thy noblest numbers tell
How he descended into hell,
And enter'd the tremendous cells
Where death in night and horror dwells;
The dreary seats his presence own'd,
And to their inmost caverns groan'd,
Chaos through all his empire shook,
The' alarm the' infernal tyrant took,
And, roaring loud in wild affright,
Ran, fled through all the realms of night,
In hope to hide his guilty head,
When thus the Lord of glory said:
"Monster, cursed cause of sin and woe,
In vain thou triest to shun my blow:
This bolt shall find, shall pierce thee through,
Though, to conceal thee from my view,
Thou under hell's profoundest wave
Should'st dive to seek a sheltering grave."
He spoke, and with unerring aim
Full on the foe he flung the flame
His Father gave: through all the coasts
Hell trembled, trembled all the ghosts,
Who well ethereal fires might dread
Ere since before their force they fled
From the celestial light and bliss
Down to the bottomless abyss.

Now from the deep loud thunders sound
Scattering immense destruction round,
Tear up the dungeons from their base
Prepared to' immure the chosen race.
Here in a thousand fragments lie
Engines of hellish tyranny,
Fetters, wheels, racks asunder burst,
And every cruelty accursed;
While Death in lamentable groans
The plunder of his darts bemoans.
But see the God, with conquest crown'd,
Returning from the dark profound;
See up heaven's hills the triumph roll'd;
See to his wheels of burning gold
Proud Satan chain'd, and with a throng
Of hell's grim monsters dragg'd along.
What shouts of joy from angels rise,
While he ascends his native skies!
What pleasure in the Victor glow'd,
While through the gates of bliss he rode!
His praises, ye seraphic choirs,
Resound, and sweep your golden lyres,
His praises to all human tongues.
Resound, and tune the noblest songs,
While the glad stars, that round the pole
'Twixt heaven and earth incessant roll,
Seize from both worlds the tuneful sound,
And waft the' immortal echoes round.

It may be some entertainment to the reader to be informed who were the Doctor's fellow-students, and were honoured with his esteem and friendship. I shall mention three of the number,—Mr. Josiah Hort, Mr. John Hughes, and Mr. Samuel Say. Mr. Hort was his ac-

quaintance and fellow-pupil, and was pronounced by the Doctor "the first genius in the academy." This gentleman, after having been educated at a Dissenting academy, and probably descended from Dissenting parents, entered into the established Church, and subsequently became Archbishop of Tuam.

Mr. John Hughes was also the Doctor's friend and fellow-student. This gentleman was born at Marlborough, in Wiltshire, January 9th, 1677, but was educated at London, receiving the first rudiments of his learning in private schools, and afterwards becoming a pupil of Mr. Rowe; for the Doctor says in a letter to Mr. Duncombe, that they "were fellow-students together in logic and philosophy." The Doctor informed me that Mr. Hughes, by his own confession, so entirely devoted himself to poetry, that he gave little or no attention while he was at the academy to any thing beside; and that the Doctor, in consequence, advised him to decline the ministry. Accordingly it does not appear that Mr. Hughes even so much as preached once in public; and it is very certain that he became a votary, and indeed an eminent favourite, of the Muses.* What sentiments Dr. Watts entertained concerning his poems will appear from a letter of his to Mr. Duncombe, dated May 23d, 1735. "Your letter," says he,

* See his "Poems on several Occasions, with some select Essays in prose," in two volumes.

" and the present of Mr. Hughes's works, were joyfully received by me the next day after I saw you. Methinks I see the very man, my old acquaintance, there with his temper and softness, his wit and sprightly genius, spreading almost over every page. But my sorrow freshens and renews upon my heart, that such a genius did not live to write more moral and divine odes, in advanced years to be a counterpoise to all the charms of pleasure, and youth, and beauty which his younger poesy indulged. Yet, it must be confessed, I can find nothing which is an offence to virtue and piety, so far as I have perused, and I have read more than half. The Christian scheme has glories and beauties in it, which have superior power to touch the soul beyond all the gods and heroes of the heathen heaven or elysium. I should have been much pleased to see such a pen employing its art on such themes. Mr. Pope's Messiah always charms me. I speak not now of Mr. Hughes's odes on the 'Creator of the World,' the 'Ecstasy,' &c., because I have read them long ago. These have so much dignity in them that I wished for more of the same kind."

As Mr. Hughes shone as a poet, so he had also a fine pen for prose; and had some share in the " Guardian," a greater in the " Tatler," and more abundantly contributed to the " Spectator."

Mr. Samuel Say was another acquaintance and

fellow-student with Dr. Watts. He was born about 1675, and was the second son of Mr. Giles Say, Minister of St. Michael's parish, Southampton, but ejected thence by the Act of Uniformity in 1662. Mr. Say, the son, discovered, when he was but young, a strong inclination to the ministry. His father accordingly took care to have him educated in the best manner he could for this purpose from his earliest years; and about 1692 he entered as a pupil in Mr. Rowe's academy. After exercising his ministry at various places in the country, he was finally called to succeed Dr. Edmund Calamy, in the pastorship of the church of Protestant Dissenters in Westminster. He removed thither in 1734, and continued till April 12th, 1743, when he left our world, after a week's illness, in the sixty-eighth year of his age.

Dr. Hughes, in his funeral sermon on Mr. Say, draws a very lovely character of him as a Minister; and the editor * of his poems and other compositions, published a year or two after his death, pays him the following honours:— "He had great candour and good-breeding, without stiffness or formality; an open countenance, and a temper always communicative. He was a tender husband, an indulgent father, and of a most benevolent disposition; ever ready to do good, and to relieve the wants of the distressed, to

* William Duncombe, Esq.

the utmost extent of his abilities. He was well versed in astronomy and natural philosophy, had a taste for music and poetry, and was a good critic, and master of the classics." Mr. Say's poems are not destitute of merit; but the two essays in prose, published with them, the first on the harmony, variety, and power of numbers in general, and the other on those of "Milton's Paradise Lost," in particular, "have been much admired," says the Rev. John Duncombe, "by persons of taste and judgment." Readers of those essays will learn what beauties arise from numbers, and how much they contribute to fine composition, and be convinced that Milton's happy management of his pauses, and his infusion of spondees, trochees, and dactyls, with the iambics of an English verse, as his subjects and descriptions required, are among the distinguishing excellencies of his poem. This discovery, I believe I may truly affirm, was first made by Mr. Say; and he therefore is alone entitled to the honour of it, though others have since availed themselves of it without acknowledging to whom they were indebted. It may be further added, in the words of the editor of Mr. Say's works, "that these essays were drawn up at the request of Mr. Richardson the painter, who was pleased with Mr. Say's uncommon way of thinking."

CHAPTER III.

AFTER the Doctor had finished his academical studies, at the age only of twenty years, he returned to his father's house at Southampton, where he spent two years in reading, meditation, and prayer;—in reading, to possess himself of ampler knowledge; in meditation, by which he might take a full survey of useful and sacred subjects, and make what he had acquired by reading his own; and prayer, to engage the divine influences to prepare him for that work to which he was determined to devote his life, and of the importance of which he had a deep sense upon his spirit.

Having thus employed two years at his father's, he was invited by Sir John Hartopp, Baronet, to reside in his family at Stoke-Newington, near London, as tutor to his son, where he continued five years, and by his behaviour procured himself such esteem and respect as laid the foundation of that friendship which subsisted between him and his pupil to the day of his death.

Among the Doctor's works are two discourses, one entitled the "Last Enemy conquered," a funeral sermon on the death of Lady Hartopp, daughter of Charles Fleetwood, Esq., and wife of Sir John Hartopp, who died November 9th, 1711; and the other entitled, "The Happiness of

separate Spirits made perfect," a funeral sermon on Sir John Hartopp himself, who died April 1st, 1722, aged eighty-five. As the Doctor had no less than five years' residence in Sir John's family, for the purpose of educating his son, it may not be improper to give some account concerning him, especially as the Doctor's own faithful as well as ingenious pencil has drawn his character. "When I name Sir John Hartopp," says he towards the close of his discourse, "all that knew him will agree that I name a gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian. He shone with eminence among persons of birth and title on earth; while his obliging deportment and affable temper rendered him easy of access to all his inferiors, and made him the delight of all his friends. Though he knew what was due to his quality in this world, yet he affected none of the grandeurs of this life, but daily practised condescension and love, and secured the respect of all without assuming a superior air. He had a taste for universal learning; and ingenious arts were his delight from his youth. He pursued knowledge in various forms, and was acquainted with many parts of human science. Mathematical speculations and practices were a favourite study with him in younger years; and even to his old age he maintained his acquaintance with the heavenly bodies, and light and shade, whereby time is measured. But the book of God was his chief study, and his

divinest delight. His Bible lay before him night and day, and he was well acquainted with the writers who explained it best. He was desirous of seeing what the Spirit of God said to men in the original languages; for this end, he commenced some acquaintance with the Hebrew when he was more than fifty years old; and, that he might be capable of judging of any text in the New Testament, he kept his youthful knowledge of the Greek language, in some measure, to the period of life. Among the various themes of Christian contemplation, he took peculiar pleasure in the doctrines of grace, in the display of the glories of the person of Christ, God in our nature, and the wondrous work of redemption by his cross. He adored him as his Lord and his God; and, while he trusted in his righteousness as the great Mediator, and beheld him as his crucified Saviour, he was ever zealous to maintain the honours due to his divine nature and majesty. His practice in life was agreeable to his Christian principles; for he knew that the grace of God, which brings salvation to men, teaches them to deny all ungodliness, and to live sober, righteous, and religious lives, that in all things they may adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour. His conversation was pious and learned, ingenious and instructive. He was inquisitive into the affairs of the learned world, the progress of arts and sciences, the concerns of the nation, and the interests of the church

of Christ; and, upon all occasions, was as ready to communicate as he was to inquire. What he knew of the things of God or man, he resolved not to know them only for himself, but for the benefit of all who had the honour of his acquaintance. There are many of his friends who will join with me to confess how often we have departed from his company refreshed and advanced in useful knowledge; and I cannot but reckon it among the blessings of heaven when I review those five years of pleasure and improvement which I spent in his family in my younger part of life, and I found much instruction myself where I was called to be an instructer. His zeal for the welfare of his country, and of the church of Christ in it, carried him out to the most extensive and toilsome services in his younger and middle age. He employed his time, his spirits, his interest, and his riches for the defence of this poor nation, when forty years ago it was in the utmost danger of Popery and ruin. His doors were ever open, and his carriage always friendly and courteous, to the Ministers of the Gospel, though they were distinguished among themselves by names of different parties; for he loved all who loved Jesus Christ in sincerity. He chose, indeed, to bear a part in constant public worship with the Protestant Dissenters; for he thought their practices more agreeable to the rules of the Gospel. He joined himself in communion with one of

their churches, which was under the pastoral care of the Rev. Dr. John Owen, where he continued an honourable member, under successive Pastors, to the day of his death. Nor was he ashamed to own and support that despised interest, nor to frequent those assemblies, when the spirit of persecution raged highest in the days of King Charles, and King James the Second. He was a present refuge for the oppressed, and the special providence of God secured him, and his friends, from the fury of the oppressor. He was always a devout and diligent attender on public ordinances till the last years of his life, when the infirmities of age, coming upon him, confined him to his private retirements. But if age confined him, death gave him a release. He is exalted now to the church in heaven, and has taken his place in that glorious assembly, where he worships among them before the throne. There he has no need to relieve his memory by the swiftness of his pen, which was his perpetual practice in the church on earth, and by which means he often entertained his family in the evening-worship, on the Lord's day, with excellent discourses, some of which he copied from the lips of some of the greatest Preachers of the last age. There his unbodied spirit is able to sustain the sublimest raptures of devotion, which run through the worshippers in that heavenly state, though here on earth I have seen the pious pleasure too

strong for him; and, while he has been reading the things of God to his household, the devotion of his heart has broken through his eyes, has interrupted his voice, and commanded a sacred pause and silence."

Such was that excellent man in whose family the Doctor resided for the instruction of his son, the late Sir John Hartopp, a gentleman of abilities and learning which might have adorned a public sphere, but he preferred a private life all his days. He esteemed and honoured his worthy preceptor while living, and showed his regard for his memory after his decease. He died at Bath, January 13th, 1762.

While the Doctor assisted Mr. Hartopp's studies, he did not neglect his own; for not only did he make further improvement in those parts of learning in which he instructed the young gentleman, but he applied himself to reading the Scriptures in the original tongues, and the best Commentators, critical and practical.

The Doctor began to preach on his birth-day, 1698, at twenty-four years of age; and was the same year chosen assistant to Dr. Isaac Chauncy, Pastor of the church then meeting at Mark-lane, London. But his public labours, which met with general acceptance, were interrupted by a threatening illness of five months, which was thought to have arisen from the fervour of his zeal in preaching the Gospel of his Lord and Saviour.

His sickness did not discourage him from renewing his delightful work, as soon as Providence was pleased to restore him to health. A good soldier of Jesus Christ, when he receives a wound in the field, will not be disheartened, but cheerfully return to his arms and duty as soon as he is capable of attempting any further service in the cause of his divine Master.

In January, 1701–2, the Doctor received a call from the church to succeed Dr. Chauncy in the pastoral office, which he accepted the very day on which King William died, March 8th, 1701–2, notwithstanding the discouraging prospect which that event gave to non-conformist Ministers, and the fears with which it filled the hearts of Dissenters in general. But he had set his hand to the plough, and would not look back; and accordingly he was solemnly ordained to the pastoral office on March 18th following.

The Rev. Dr. Savage, successor to Dr. Watts in the pastorship of the church, has favoured me with the records of its transactions, in which I find a letter of recommendation of Dr. Watts from the Rev. Thomas Rowe's church, which runs as follows:—

"*To the Church of Christ, of which the Rev. Dr. Chauncy was lately Pastor.*

"FORASMUCH as our dear brother Mr. Isaac Watts, who was with great satisfaction admitted a

member amongst us, and hath since walked as becomes the Gospel, to the glory of God, and to the honour of his holy profession, doth now desire his dismission from us, we do, in compliance therewith, discharge him from his membership among us in order to his being received by you, praying that his ministerial labours, and those gifts and graces wherewith the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of the church, hath been pleased so richly to furnish him, may be abundantly blessed to the conversion of souls, and your edification, to whose grace and blessing we do from our hearts commend both him and you.

" Subscribed with the consent of the church by

" Thomas Rowe, Pastor,
" Nathanael Peacock,
" John Antrim.

" Feb. 26th, 1701–2."

How honourable and affectionate is this testimonial to the Doctor's character, after eight years' continuance with Mr. Rowe's church !

It appears from the said records that Dr. Watts, on the day in which he was ordained to the pastoral office, declared publicly and solemnly his acceptance of the choice the church had made of him to that service in the following words :—

" Brethren,—You know what a constant aversion I have had to any proposals of a pastoral

office for these three years, even since the providence of God called me first among you. You know also that, since you have given me an unanimous and solemn call thereto, I have heartily proposed several methods for your settlement without me; but your choice and your affections seemed still to be settled and unmoved. I have objected warmly and often my own indispositions of body, which incapacitate me for much service; and I have pointed often to three reverend Divines that are members of this church, whose gifts might render them more proper for instruction, and whose age for government. These things I have urged till I have provoked you to sorrow and tears, and till I myself have been almost ashamed. But your perseverance in your choice and love, your constant profession of edification by my ministry, the great probability you show me of building up this famous and decayed church of Christ if I accept the call, and your prevailing fears of its dissolution if I refuse, have given me ground to believe that the voice of this church is the voice of Christ by you; and to answer this call, I have not consulted with flesh and blood; I have laid aside the thoughts of myself, to serve the interest of our Lord. I give up my own ease for your spiritual profit and your increase. I submit my inclinations to my duty and, in hopes of being made an instrument in the hands of Christ to build up this ancient

church, I return this solemn answer to your call, that, with a great sense of my own inability in mind and body to discharge the duties of so sacred an office, I do, in the strength of Christ, venture upon it, and in the name of our Lord Jesus I accept your call, promising, in the presence of God and his saints, my utmost diligence in all the duties of a Pastor so far as God shall enlighten and strengthen me; and I leave this promise in the hands of Christ our Mediator to see it performed by me unto you through the assistance of his grace and Spirit."

What devotion, humility, and tender regard to the good of souls run through this address; and how well, as will hereafter be shown, did he afterwards fulfil his ministry, according to his sacred engagements!

But the joy of the church in their happy settlement in so able and excellent a Pastor was quickly after sadly damped by his being seized with a painful and alarming illness, which laid him aside for some time, and from which he recovered but by slow degrees. The church saw it needful to provide him with a stated assistant; and accordingly the Rev. Samuel Price was chosen to that service in July, 1703. Although the Doctor's public labours were by these means considerably relieved, yet his health remained fluctuating for some years. As it increased he renewed his diligence in the discharge

of his ministry; and his people were delighted and edified with his sermons from the pulpit, and his conversations with them in the visits which he made to their families. He went on without any considerable interruption in his work, and with great success and prosperity to the church, till the year 1712, when, in September, he was seized with a violent fever, which shook his constitution, and left such weakness upon his nerves as continued with him in some degree to his dying day. Upon this occasion "prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him." Several days of supplication were kept on his account, in which many of his brethren in the ministry assisted, and wrestled earnestly with the Lord for the continuance of so promising an instrument of his glory. He was graciously pleased to answer their importunate requests by adding to his life more than thirty-six years; most of them, indeed, years of feeble health, but of eminent usefulness to the church and world. Not till October, 1716, (more than four years, a long and painful chasm as to the exercise of his ministry both to his people and himself,) was the Doctor able to return to his public services. In the mean time his assistant, Mr. Price, was, at his desire, and upon his recommendation, chosen by the church to be co-Pastor with him; to which office he was ordained March 3d, 1713.

Though this long interval of sickness was on

some accounts a very distressing season, yet a kind Providence made it the happiest era of the Doctor's life, as it was the occasion of introducing him into the family of Sir Thomas Abney, Knight, and Alderman of London, who, on principles of the most generous compassion and friendship, took him in a very languishing state of health to his own house, where he was most liberally supplied with all that could contribute to his convenience and satisfaction to the end of his days; for, though this eminent friend of his country and of the church of God, and particularly of the Doctor, died in the year 1722, the like benevolent spirit which he had discovered was continued by his worthy Lady, and their daughters. Her Ladyship survived the Doctor above a year. Of their kind and honourable regards to him I will say nothing, except that I myself was a frequent witness of them in the many visits which at different times I made to that most respectable, virtuous, and happy family.

Sir Thomas Abney was one of the younger sons of James Abney, Esq., of Wilsley, in the county of Derby. He was born in January, 1639, and was the religious son of worthy and pious parents. His mother dying when he was young, and in the times of public confusion, by which the family were no small sufferers, his father placed him at school at Loughborough in the county of Leicester, that he might be under the eye and care of his

aunt, the honourable and virtuous Lady Bromley. Her pious instructions, it is believed, made early impressions upon him, and were the happy means of a sober and religious turn of mind, which continued through the whole of his life. Thus under the influence of divine grace he was fortified against temptations in his apprenticeship; especially as he took all opportunities of attending the most judicious and practical Preachers, under whom he became the more confirmed in those good principles which his pious aunt had instilled into him. His character was in all respects commendable, not only clear from the vices of the age, but very exemplary and eminent. His piety and serious regard to religion were conspicuous. He feared God from his youth, and showed the truth and power of that divine principle which guided, animated, and influenced him in all his actions. The duties of the second table, in which he was careful and exact, were all performed in virtue and pursuance of the duties of the first. The fear and love of God, and the desire of pleasing and honouring him, were the spring and very life and soul of every action, consecrating, as it were, his whole life, and making all that he did an honour and worship to his God. To his piety were joined probity and justice. He was sincere in his words and promises, and faithful in his engagements and trusts, never giving in to any ways of fraud, deceit, or collusion. He sought no gain but with a good

conscience; and God crowned and blessed his righteous conduct with considerable increase. He was of a meek and quiet spirit, affable and courteous, temperate in meats and drinks, and the pleasures of life. He was very charitable both in his judging and speaking of others, and in ministering to the necessities of such as were in want. He was of a catholic spirit, extending his love and regard to persons of all parties bearing the Christian name, however divided in lesser matters. He was compassionate and tender-hearted, readily sympathizing with his friends in their sorrows, and full of pity towards objects of misery. He was an affectionate and tender husband, a loving and prudent father, and watchful over the good and happiness of his children; a just and kind master; and for holy order and government, and the exercises of religion, his house might be considered as a church of God. Here were every day the morning and evening sacrifices of prayer and praise, and reading the holy Scriptures, many times with proper helps to understand and profit by them. The Lord's day he strictly observed and sanctified. God was solemnly sought and worshipped both before and after the family's attendance on public ordinances. The repetition of sermons, the reading good books, the instruction of the household, and the singing the divine praises together, were much of the sacred employment of the holy day; variety and brevity making the

whole not burdensome but pleasant, leaving at the same time room for the devotions of the closet, as well as for intervening works of necessity and mercy. Persons coming into such a family with a serious turn of mind might well cry out, "This is no other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven!" Besides the ordinary and stated services of religion, occasional calls and seasons for worship were also much regarded. In signal family mercies and afflictions, in going journeys, in undertaking and accomplishing any matters of greater moment, God was especially owned by prayer and thanksgiving; the assistance of Ministers being often called in upon such occasions. Through the whole course of his life he was Priest in his own family, excepting when a Minister happened to be present, or any such sojourned with him. Sir Thomas's constant practice was to lead his household in the acts of worship, and to offer up their addresses to God, which he performed with great seriousness and warmth of affection. The word of God being read constantly as a preface to prayer in his family, he chose to do that also himself, unless for a few of the last years of life, in which he thought fit to put the performance of that part of religious duty upon his children. As to the sermons that were read in the evening of the Lord's day, he took that service upon himself, and held on in that course to his last sickness and death; and those who resided in his

house were witnesses with what affection he went through that work, and how often he hath been melted into tears, so that he could scarce proceed without a pause. It may be further remarked concerning this excellent man, that when he has just come from the necessary business and affairs of his station, it was still with such a composure of spirit that he was ever in a frame for the exercises of religion, and gave reason thence to conclude that he walked with God all the day long.

As a most demonstrative and striking proof of Sir Thomas's constant regard to God, and the duties he owed him, Lady Abney informed me, that he kept up regular prayer in his family during all his mayoralty; and that, upon the evening of the day he entered on his office, he without any notice withdrew from the public assembly at Guildhall after supper, went to his house, there performed family worship, and then returned to the company.

In 1693 he was elected Sheriff of London and Middlesex; which trust he so honourably and faithfully executed, that before his year expired he was chosen Alderman, and received the honour of Knighthood from King William. In 1700 he was chosen Lord Mayor some years before his turn. In this year his hearty zeal for the Protestant interest exerted itself in an uncommon degree. He had the courage at that juncture to propose an

address from the Common Council to the King, though he was much opposed in it by the majority of his brethren of the bench. The design and purport of the address was to signify their resolution to stand by His Majesty, in opposition to France and the Pretender; whom the French Monarch had lately caused to be proclaimed King of Great Britain. Sir Thomas surmounted all the obstructions which the adversaries of this affair threw in his way; and he carried his point with remarkable success. This address was transmitted to King William, then beyond the seas, forming, guiding, and uniting the counsels of the Protestant world, and by his power and interest rescuing and sustaining the liberties of Europe. When this noble resolution of the city of London was publicly known, it animated the affairs of the King, and gave new life to his interest both abroad and at home. A considerable person then living complimented Sir Thomas Abney on this occasion, assuring him, that he had done more service to the King, than if he had raised him a million of money. This leading example of London, under the conduct of the chief Magistrate, greatly inspirited the whole nation, and was followed by addresses of the like nature from most of the corporations. Upon which the King dissolved the Parliament, and resolved to have the sense of his people in their choice of a new one, as he told them in that last admirable speech of his, Decem-

ber 31st, 1701. Sir Thomas was chosen by the citizens of London a member of this Parliament, to the calling of which his conduct in the mayoralty doubtless had much influence. This Parliament happily attained the ends which this excellent Prince had in view; for they quickly formed an Act for the abjuration of the Pretender, and the further establishment of the Protestant succession to the throne. This law received the royal assent only the day before the King died; and he left it as his best legacy for the nation. By this means the crown was secured to the house of Brunswick; for, though it was declared by the preceding Parliament to belong to that family, yet, in the apprehension of wise and thoughtful men, the descent of it in the appointed line was too precarious till it was guarded and secured by a subsequent law against all opposers. So much was the succession of the house of Hanover to these kingdoms obliged to the zeal and labours of a Protestant Dissenter!

Lady Abney was the daughter of John Gunston, Esq., of Stoke-Newington, and was married to Sir Thomas in 1700. Her character is well delineated, in its shining excellencies, in a sermon upon her death by her Pastor, the Rev. Samuel Price; and, indeed, her grace and virtues, as I can attest from my acquaintance with her, shone in an uncommon union and lustre, which I endeavoured to describe in an ode that I published,

not long after her decease. If any persons, judging from the general appearance of religion in the present day, should imagine, upon viewing the picture I drew of her Ladyship, that I was too lavish of my colours; I am well satisfied, had they known the original, they would confess I had only done justice to it. The ode is as follows:—

TO THE MEMORY OF THAT AMIABLE MIRROR OF CHRISTIAN GRACE AND VIRTUE,

DAME MARY ABNEY,

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE JANUARY 12TH, 1749–50.

THE Muse, who on her sacred strings
Virtue's immortal honours sings,
Thus warbling to the vernal shade
The female character essay'd:—

"Let wisdom's majesty serene
And dove-like gentleness be seen
On woman's brows, and mingling there
At once excite our love and fear.
Instead of vanity's array
To' outvie the lustres of the day,
Decent and modest be her dress,
Such as may suitably express
How she the inward gem can prize
Beyond the casket where it lies.
Let undissembled piety
With Heaven's unerring rules agree;
Not like the Popish faith, which teems
With monstrous tales, and idle dreams;
Nor framed from pagan schemes, that shun
The stream where peace and pardon run.
Let every truth the Scriptures show
Upon her heart divinely glow,

And shed its undiminish'd rays
O'er all the tenor of her days,
As shine unquench'd the orbs on high,
While meteors mount, and blaze, and die.
Is she a wife ? Let winning love,
Obedience, and discretion prove
How well she dignifies the name
With nuptial care, and nuptial flame.
Is she a mother ? Let her skill
And assiduity fulfil
A mother's arduous task, and guide
Her children blooming at her side
Along religion's blissful ways,
And teach the pleasure and the praise.
Be it her labour to destroy
Each weed that might her plants annoy,
To bend the branches as they shoot,
And nurse young virtue's bud to fruit.
Should riches to her charge be given,
Let her improve the boon for heaven ;
The bounds of wealth let her survey,
And in the scales of wisdom weigh
What portion justice may demand,
And what may crown her generous hand,
Then ope her charitable door,
And deal her bounties to the poor ;
While plenty round her house is shown
Alike to want or waste unknown,
Plenty, which Temperance' hand restrains,
And guided by Discretion's reins.
Upon the Sabbath's glad return
Religion's radiant lamp should burn
With double lustre through the day
Without cessation or decay.
Be regular attendance given
At God's own house, the port of heaven,

Nor let the remnant-hours complain
That they have pour'd their sands in vain
Nor let religion veil its light
When heaven's high day has wing'd its flight,
But, as the morn and evening run
Perpetual circles with the sun,
Let pure devotion's flames ascend,
While her whole family attend,
And join in supplicating cries,
And grateful honours to the skies.
Let courtesy with heart sincere
In all her life to all appear:
But let her favourite friends be few,
And, like herself, to virtue true.
Let ever-wakeful prudence guide
Her bark o'er life's uncertain tide,
Cautious of flattery's siren breath,
Which lulls the listening soul to death,
And slander which, like Ætna, pours
Tumultuous storm and burning showers.
But let her be divinely bold
Duty's obstructed path to hold,
When tempests beat, and thunders roll,
And hideous night involves the pole:
Pursuing thus her glorious way
At length the shores of heavenly day
Shall shine, and with the vision blest,
Her soul, of holy calms possest,
Shall make the port of endless rest."

Thus sung the Muse. Fair Truth was by,
Crown'd with the radiance of the sky,
And swift replied: "And dares thy verse
Abney's high character rehearse?
Her name superior to thy praise
Deserves the songs which angels raise."

CHAPTER IV.

THOUGH the Doctor's life from the time of closing his studies affords but little variety, and admits only of a short narration, as it flowed along in an even tenor, one year, one month, one week, one day, being in a manner a repetition of the former; yet several observations may be made upon the events, few as they may be, which may prove not unentertaining or uninstructive. My first observation shall be upon the Doctor's very favourable opportunities for improvement in the interval between his leaving the academy, and his entrance upon the work of the ministry; which might much contribute to that eminent figure he afterwards made as a Divine and an author. He retired for two years to his father's, for the noble purpose of reading, meditation, and prayer. He was in the house of one who undoubtedly loved him with a most tender affection, who had it in his power to grant him, and whose paternal kindness could not refuse, every thing that could tend to make him comfortable, and promote and forward his laudable designs. He was in the house of a man of eminent piety, who would not fail to cherish the divine life which to his unspeakable joy he observed in his son. What large draughts of knowledge then must the Doctor, considering his early and inextinguishable thirst for improve-

ment, necessarily imbibe by a daily course of reading, contemplation, and prayer; and all this without any interruption amidst the enjoyment of a father's wise and pious counsels and conversation, and the edifying and animating efficacy of his holy example!

From his father's roof he removed into the family of Sir John Hartopp, and there continued five years as a preceptor to his son. Here he enjoyed the advantage of an intimacy with a gentleman of great abilities, and extraordinary piety, which the Doctor well knew both how to value and improve. Here he had also the opportunity of conversing with persons of real worth, and taking a large survey of the varieties of mankind from the numerous company that at one time, and on one occasion or other, resided in Sir John's family, or made their visits to him. Here he was more firmly securing to himself those rich treasures of learning of which he was already possessed, but which became more fully his own by communicating them to his pupil. Here he made vast additions to the knowledge he had obtained, and entered deep into those parts of science with which he might be but imperfectly acquainted before; and all this to discharge in its full extent of advantage his work as a tutor, while at the same time he kept in view his preparation for the ministry, and cultivated those studies which had a more direct and immediate concern with that

sacred office to which he had determined to devote his days.

Such were the favourable opportunities which the Doctor enjoyed for his improvement for several years after he had completed his academical course; and Providence seemed kindly resolved that nothing should be wanting, as to an happy concurrence of situation and residence, to open the way to his future course of usefulness to the church and the world.

Our next observation shall be made upon that remarkably kind providence which brought the Doctor into Sir Thomas Abney's family, and continued him there till his death, a period of no less than thirty-six years. In the midst of his sacred labours for the glory of God, and the good of his generation, he is seized with a most violent and threatening fever, which leaves him oppressed with great weakness, and puts a stop at least to his public services for four years. In this distressing season, doubly so to his active and pious spirit, he is invited to Sir Thomas Abney's family, nor ever removes from it till he had finished his days. Here he enjoyed the uninterrupted demonstrations of the truest friendship. Here, without any care of his own, he had every thing which could contribute to the enjoyment of life, and favour the unwearied pursuit of his studies. Here he dwelt in a family which, for piety, order, harmony, and every

virtue, was a house of God. Here he had the privilege of a country recess, the pure air, the retired grove, the fragrant bower, the spreading lawn, the flowery garden, and other advantages to soothe his mind, and aid his restoration to health, to yield him, whenever he chose them, most grateful intervals from his laborious studies, and enable him to return to them with redoubled vigour and delight. Had it not been for this most happy event, he might, as to outward view, have feebly, it may be painfully, dragged on through many more years of languor, and inability for public service, and even for profitable study; or, perhaps, might have sunk into his grave under the overwhelming load of infirmities in the midst of his days, and thus the church and world would have been deprived of those many excellent works which he drew up and published during his long residence in this family.

In a few years after his coming hither Sir Thomas Abney died; but his amiable consort survived, who showed the Doctor the same respect and friendship as before; and most happily for him, and great numbers besides; for, as her riches were great, her generosity and munificence were in full proportion: her thread of life was drawn out to a great age, even beyond that of the Doctor's; and thus this excellent man, through her kindness, and that of her daughter, who in a like degree esteemed and honoured him, enjoyed

all the benefits he experienced at his first entrance into this family till his days were finished, and, like a shock of corn in its season, he ascended into the regions of perfect life and joy. Thus did God most remarkably provide a situation for him, for a long succession of years, in a house where there was every thing that could conduce to his comfort and usefulness. What honours are due to this family from the church and world! Where the name of Dr. Watts is mentioned as a distinguished blessing, let it ever be gratefully remembered that it might, under Providence, be owing to Sir Thomas Abney and his amiable Lady that he was continued so long a burning and a shining light in this hemisphere of the church, and that there are such remains of his beneficial lustres in the excellent sermons and other works which were composed by him under their roof. Their eminent characters, and particularly their kindness to him, are recorded by the Doctor himself, and, with a fame like his own, shall descend to the latest posterity.

Our third remark shall be upon the Doctor's frequent strokes of illness, and the benefits which might accrue from them That he had numerous and very afflicting instances of this kind, appears from the accounts Dr. Jennings gives, in his funeral sermon, of his being laid aside by sickness five months soon after he had become assistant to Dr. Chauncy, 1698; of his being

visited with another illness quickly after his taking the pastoral charge in 1701; and of a most violent fever which seized him in 1712, shattered his constitution, debilitated his nerves, and prevented his return to his public work till October, 1716; as to the Doctor, no doubt, four very long and painful years. We also find from his own record that he was confined to a bed of sickness in 1729.* And in 1736 he composed a hymn, which he styles "Complaint and Hope under great Pain," published in his "Remnants of Time employed in Prose and Verse." More instances of his bodily disorders, and those to a great degree, might be recited, if these already mentioned were not sufficient for our purpose. In this manner did his holy, wise, and gracious Father see fit to afflict him. He travelled through many a "valley of weeping," in his pilgrimage to the better country. But were not all these dark and distressing dispensations the procedures of wisdom and goodness? And might not these often-returning trials be divinely blessed to keep him low, humble, and constantly at the foot of God, as in the case of St. Paul, who tells us, that, "lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of revelations, he had given him a thorn in the flesh?" 2 Cor. xii. 7. Might not this excellent man under these sharp afflictions be better able to sympathize with his fellow-saints

* Preface to his "Humble Attempt."

under their distresses, be enlarged in his prayers for them, and be quickened both as to his tongue and pen to administer the more abundant consolations, as the Apostle speaks?—"And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer; or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation." 2 Cor. i. 6.

I may be allowed here to repeat part of a letter which the Doctor wrote to a Minister in affliction, in which there appears not only a vein of true spiritual friendship, but a powerful pathos, which his own experience of trials might perhaps happily inspire. "It is my hearty desire for you, that your faith may ride out the storms of temptation, and the anchor of your hope may hold, being fixed within the veil. There sits Jesus our forerunner, who sailed over this rough sea before us, and has given us a chart, even his word, where the shelves and rocks, the fierce currents and dangers, are well described; and he is our pilot, and will conduct us to the shores of happiness. I am persuaded that in the future state we shall take a sweet review of those scenes of Providence which have been involved in the thickest darkness, and trace those footsteps of God when he walked with us through the deepest waters. This will be a surprising delight, to survey the manifold harmony of clashing dispensations, and to have those perplexing riddles

laid open to the eyes of our souls, and read the full meaning of them in set characters of wisdom and grace."

Besides all this the Doctor has left us striking proofs of his suitable temper of mind, his hope, his faith, his submission, and humble pleadings with God for relief under his trials; and we should not, I am persuaded, have known so much of his piety had he been a stranger to the furnace of affliction. How comfortably does he feel himself, and how does his soul rejoice in his God, under the pressure of sickness, in that second part of what he entitles "Thoughts and Meditations in a long Sickness, 1712, 1713!"

YET, gracious God, amidst these storms of nature,
Thine eyes behold a sweet and sacred calm
Reign through the realms of conscience. All within
Lies peaceful, all composed. 'Tis wondrous grace
Keeps off thy terrors from this humble bosom;
Though stain'd with sins and follies, yet serene
In penitential peace, and cheerful hope,
Sprinkled and guarded with atoning blood.
Thy vital smiles, amidst this desolation,
Like heavenly sun-beams hid behind the clouds,
Break out in happy moments, with bright radiance
Cleaving the gloom; the fair celestial light
Softens and gilds the horrors of the storm,
And richest cordials to the heart conveys.

O glorious solace of immense distress!
A conscience and a God! A friend at home,
And better Friend on high! This is my rock

Of firm support, my shield of sure defence
Against infernal arrows. Rise, my soul,
Put on thy courage. Here 's the living spring
Of joys divinely sweet, and ever new,—
A peaceful conscience, and a smiling Heaven.

A holy vein of gratitude and praise runs through the fourth part of the above-mentioned "Thoughts and Meditations;" in which, blessing God for his recovery to health, he says,—

Rise from my couch, ye late enfeebled limbs,
Prove your new strength, and show the' effective skill
Of the Divine Physician; bear away
This tottering body to his sacred threshold;
There, laden with his honours, let me bow
Before his feet, let me pronounce his grace,
Pronounce salvation through his dying Son,
And teach this sinful world the Saviour's name:
Then rise, my hymning soul, on holy notes
Toward his high throne; awake, my choicest songs,
Run echoing round the roof, and, while you pay
The solemn vows of my distressful hours,
A thousand friendly lips shall aid the praise.

Jesus, great Advocate, whose pitying eye
Saw my long anguish, and with melting heart
And powerful intercession spread'st my woes,
With all my groans, before the Father-God,
Bear up my praises now: thine holy incense
Shall hallow all my sacrifice of joy,
And bring these accents grateful to his ear.
My heart, and life, and lips, and every power,
Snatch'd from the grasp of death, I here devote,
By thy bless'd hands, an offering to his name.
Amen. Hallelujah.

In evidence of the Doctor's admirable temper under his trials, I shall make another citation from his writings, in which he asks, "But has not my spirit been depressed by a sickly constitution, and confined to a feeble engine of flesh under daily disorders? Have I not sustained many sorrows on this account, and wasted some years among the infirmities of the body, and in painful idleness? Are there not several souls favoured with a more easy habitation, and yoked with a better partner? Are they not accommodated with engines which have more health and vigour, and situated in much more happy circumstances, than mine? What then? Shall I repine at my lot, and murmur against my Creator, because he has made some hundreds happier than I, while I survey whole nations, and millions of mankind, that have not a thousandth part of my blessings!"

In this spirit did he wade through the depths of his afflictions, and glorify God in them. How instructive, how animating his example! The same man that he was in the pulpit and active life, he was also on the couch of sickness, and at the brink of the grave.

There is a hymn of his, which we before mentioned, entitled "Complaint and Hope under great Pain," in which there is such a mixture of dutiful resignation to the divine appointments, and earnest pleadings with the Almighty to relieve him from his sorrows, as bears a noble testimony to the

excellency of his spirit, and affords a bright pattern for the imitation of the saints of God under his correcting hand.

LORD, I am pain'd; but I resign
To thy superior will;
'Tis grace, 'tis wisdom all divine
Appoints the pains I feel.

Dark are thy ways of providence,
While those who love thee groan;
Thy reasons lie conceal'd from sense,
Mysterious and unknown:

Yet nature may have leave to speak,
And plead before her God,
Lest the o'erburden'd heart should break
Beneath thy heavy rod.

Will nothing but such daily pain
Secure my soul from hell?
Canst thou not make my health attain
Thy kind designs as well?

How shall my tongue proclaim thy grace,
While thus at home confined?
What can I write, while painful flesh
Hangs heavy on the mind?

These groans and sighs, and flowing tears,
Give my poor spirit ease,
While every groan my Father hears,
And every tear he sees.

Is not some smiling hour at hand
With peace upon its wings?
Give it, O God, thy swift command
With all the joys it brings.

The Doctor's life, as a Non-conformist, through a kind providence, was cast upon happy days; so that from his birth to his death he had no experience of the hardships of persecution for the sake of conscience. He was born in the time of Charles II., in which, though his venerable father was imprisoned for his non-conformity, yet it does not appear that any of his family suffered on that account, except in the participation of his troubles, of which his son might have little or no remembrance. His successor, James II., was a devotee to the Church of Rome, unwearied in his endeavours to introduce Popery, and crush the Protestant religion; and to accomplish his designs he trampled down the fences of law and justice, and by his instruments of cruelty, Jefferies and Kirke, committed such butcheries in the west of England as filled the nation with horror. But we do not find that either the Doctor or any of his family were actual sufferers in these horrible times in their own persons. A blessed revolution takes place in 1688, by the coming of the Prince of Orange: the baffled tyrant quits the kingdom; and the deliverer, and his excellent Princess, by the vote of the nation, take the crown. Their conjoint reign, and afterwards that of the King only, who several years survived the Queen, proved a most propitious era to liberty: the Act of Toleration took place in favour of the Protestant Dissenters, and per-

secution, in all its fines, penalties, and imprisonments, is known no more. The Doctor enjoyed the invaluable blessing with the rest of his brethren. On King William's demise, Anne, Princess of Denmark, ascended the throne, and the Nonconformists continued unmolested during her reign; though, for some time before her death, the clouds, that had so long vanished, gathered again, and hung in thick darkness over the Dissenters, and the friends of freedom and religion in general; but by a remarkable providence they were overblown by the accession to the throne of the Elector of Hanover, afterwards George I. On his decease George II. succeeded; and during the reigns of both these excellent Kings not the least inroads were made upon the liberties of the Dissenters, but all was tranquillity and enjoyment. The Doctor was removed from our world, while the last of these Princes was upon the throne; and thus, through a long life, he never knew any of the distresses of persecution. In what a delightful period, a period such as had not blessed our land in any age, did this good man live! He had only the report, and not the painful experience, of what his venerable fathers in the ministry had suffered, when, in 1662, no less than two thousand of them were ejected from their livings, and by the Act of Uniformity were impoverished, harassed, fined, and imprisoned for worshipping God according to

their own consciences, and refusing to comply with the commandments of men. I well remember that, discoursing with the late Sir Conyers Jocelyn, about Mr. Baxter and Dr. Watts, he pleasantly observed that "the latter went to heaven on a bed of down in comparison of the former." Such was the distinguishing privilege with which this holy man was favoured, not only to his own great comfort, but to the great benefit of the church and world; who might, had his feeble frame been hunted down by persecution, or locked up in a damp suffocating prison, have been deprived in a great measure of his numerous useful writings.

Though others might suffer the wonderful deliverance which God wrought by King William, and the long train of blessings secured under Providence by that happy event, to fade away from their remembrance, Dr. Watts was not of the number of those who forgot the mighty acts of the Lord, but on every occasion gratefully and piously records them. He drew up a hymn of praise for the marvellous salvation by King William, November 5th, 1695. He published an animated poem in answer to an infamous satire, called "Advice to a Painter," written by a nameless author against King William, in which he expresses his generous resentment, displays the hero's merits, and crowns him with the noblest praises. What renders this poem in vin-

dication of King William the more remarkable is, that it is the only copy of verses in all his writings that may be denominated a satire: as if no personal offence he might receive, or any occasion less than that of dispelling the vilest reproach and calumny cast upon the most illustrious benefactor of mankind, could rouse him to poetic indignation and punishment. On the decease of the King he composed a very honourable epitaph upon him; in which he celebrates his eminent virtues in the sweetest melody and sincerest sorrow.

While Queen Anne trod in the steps of her worthy predecessors, William and Mary, the Doctor addressed a poem to her, full of grateful honour, in which he forgets not the praises of our illustrious deliverer. He expressly applies the seventy-fifth psalm, which he entitles "Power and deliverance from God" alone, to the glorious Revolution by King William, or the happy accession of King George to the throne. Some time after Queen Anne's decease, he inserted in a new edition of his lyric poems a beautiful ode in honour of King George I.; and, when that great Prince died, he preached a sermon on the occasion, in which he largely delineates his royal excellencies, not without a recital of our obligations to King William for the settlement of the crown in the house of Hanover. "Let us recollect," says he, "with pleasure, the mercy of God

who inspired his predecessor King William, of glorious memory, to lay the foundation of the Protestant succession to the crown of these kingdoms. Then he prepared an healing balm for the wound which we received at the death of our late Sovereign, and made a happy provision against a thousand distant dangers." On the coronation of George II., the Doctor wrote a long ode full of the most loyal and devout wishes, and enriched with the beauties of the finest poetry, though he was then between fifty and sixty years of age. In the ode he scatters a fresh flower upon the grave of King William, as if he should not be unremembered on any occasion in which his name and praises could with any propriety be introduced. The following stanzas conclude the poem:—

COME, light divine, and grace unknown,
Come, aid the labours of the throne:
Let Britain's golden ages run
In circles lasting as the sun.

Bid some bright legions from the sky
Assist the glad solemnity.
Ye hosts that wait on favourite Kings,
Wave your broad swords, and clap your wings;

Then rise, and to your realms convey
The glorious tidings of the day:
Great William shall rejoice to know
That George the Second rules below."

Thus did the Doctor retain and cherish, and at all proper opportunities express, a lively sense of

the wonderful salvation by King William, and its consequent blessings in the accession of the house of Hanover to the throne of these kingdoms; blessings which the good man, to his ineffable comfort, enjoyed without interruption through life. May the glories of that illustrious family, and the civil and sacred liberties of Great Britain, be ever mingled, ever shine together; and be perpetuated, with increasing strength and splendour, till sun and moon shall be no more!

CHAPTER V.

THOUGH Doctor Watts cultivated every kind of learning, and perhaps was the most universal scholar of his age; and though he possessed extraordinary abilities as a poet; yet not entertainment, but benefit, and that in the most sacred and direct sense, to the church and world, evidently appeared to be the end which he kept constantly in view.

The far greater part of his works is theological, and devoted to the most important and useful subjects. Children in early age had no small share of his endeavours for their good, as his songs and catechisms for their particular service, in the most easy and condescending language, abundantly show.

As a poet he was generally employed upon

divine themes. In the preface to his "Lyric Poems" he thus expresses himself: "It is one of the biggest satisfactions I take in giving this volume to the world, that I expect to be for ever free from the temptation of making or mending poems again. Let minds which are better furnished for such performances pursue these studies, if they are convinced that poesy can be made serviceable to religion and virtue. As for myself, I almost blush to think that I have read so little, and written so much. The following years of my life shall be more entirely devoted to the immediate and direct labours of my station."

It is further observable, that, in a season of more confirmed health, the Doctor, not content with his stated services on the Lord's day, formed a society of the younger members of his church for prayer and religious conference; to whom he delivered the substance of that excellent book, which he afterwards published, under the title of "A Guide to Prayer:" and how concerned he was to promote religion among his people by his visits to their families, as well as his public ministrations, may be learned from what he says in his dedication of the first volume of his sermons to them, 1721:—"As fast as my health increases you may assure yourselves it is devoted to your edification. It often grieves me to think how poor, feeble, and short my present labours are among you, and yet what days of faintness I generally feel after every

such attempt, so that I am continually prevented in my design of successive visits to you by the want of active spirits while I tarry in the city; and if I attempt to stay but a week or ten days there, I find a sensible return of weakness, so that I am constrained to return to the country air to recruit and maintain this little capacity of service. I bless God heartily, and you are my witnesses, that, in my better seasons of health heretofore and in the intervals of my studies, I was not a stranger to your private families, nor thoughtless of your souls' improvement."

I might venture also to add, that not only from a delight to oblige particular persons, but from a hope of doing public service, he wrote many recommendatory prefaces; being ready to lend the assistance of his name to give a wider diffusion to pious and useful compositions, than they would in all probability have obtained without it.* And

* It may be somewhat difficult to collect all the instances of the Doctor's recommendations of the works of others. The following may be enumerated:—

Preface to the "Life of the Rev. Thomas Halyburton."

——— to the Rev. Mr. Bourne's volume of "Prayers for Families."

——— to the Rev. John Reynolds's "Discourses on Reconciliation between God and Man."

——— to the Rev. John Jennings's "Discourses on preaching Christ."

——— to an Abridgment of the Rev. Dr. Cotton Mather's Life by Dr. David Jennings.

let it be remembered to his honour, as a true and faithful servant and follower of his Lord, that he studiously embraced the opportunities which Providence threw in his way of trying to do good to particular persons, by profitable and pious conversations with them; of which I will mention the following examples:—A gentlewoman who was an ornament to her sex told me that, in younger life, when on a visit at Lady Abney's, she was taken somewhat ill, and was left in the house (the rest of the family being gone abroad) with only the Doctor. The good man improved the occasion to enter into discourse with her, and give her most excellent advices, of which she retained a pleasing remembrance.

Another instance of the same kind has been communicated by the Rev. Mr. Kingsbury, of Southampton, as he received it from the mouth of the son-in-law of the person. "Mr. Richard Ellcock was a servant in old Mr. Watts's family. Dr. Watts going to London after the last time of his visiting his father at Southampton, Richard Ellcock was ordered to go with him a day's journey.

Preface to the Rev. Jonathan Edwards's "Narrative of the numerous Conversions in New-England, 1734, 1735."

——— to the Rev. Dr. Samuel Clark's, of St. Alban's, "Collection of Scripture Promises."

——— to the Remains of the Rev. John Mason, of Water-Stratford. And,

——— to the Rev. Mr. Steele's "Religious Tradesman."

The Doctor entered into serious discourse with him, which made a deep and lasting impression on his heart, and was the means of his conversion. After the Doctor came to London he wrote to his father, recommending the servant to his particular regard; for that he doubted not he would make an eminent Christian; and so he lived and died, leaving an honourable character for piety and uprightness."

Those prime and radical constituents of a truly good character, truth and sincerity, were very conspicuous in the Doctor. I never observed him, in any of his conversations, in the least degree affect to disguise any differences in religious sentiment between himself and others.. On the other hand, he appeared quite open and free to a declaration whenever an occasion offered. If there was any thing which he took notice of in his friends not quite proper or prudent in his judgment, he took the liberty of signifying it to them. He might be safely trusted; and his appearances and promises were, I am persuaded, in perfect unison with his very soul. He "ran the race that was set before him," uninfluenced by emoluments or applauses on the one hand, or by opposition or censure on the other. There was nothing in him that could be styled art or design. His soul appeared to have no foldings in it, but expanded itself in an open view at once. His mind was a clear transparent stream, whose depth was

obvious to all, and in which lay treasures richer than those of Pactolus, whose waters glided over beds of gold. He could apply to himself the words of St. Paul: "For our rejoicing is this, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world."

He never discovered any thing like a high opinion of himself. He by no means treated his inferiors with disdain; there was nothing overbearing and dogmatical in his discourse. His aspect, motion, and manner of speech betrayed no consciousness of superior abilities. Dr. Jennings, who was long and intimately acquainted with him, in his funeral discourse, bears this honourable testimony to his humility: "It was like a deep shade," says he, "if I may so express it, that set off his other graces and virtues, and made them shine with a brighter lustre: and as this grace had a mighty influence on his heart and temper, so it had no little effect in forming his sentiments, for he never thought he could be laid too low as a creature or a sinner, that he might do honour to the perfections and grace of God; and hence, in a great measure, arose that high esteem which he had for the Christian dispensation, which is so apparently calculated to exalt God and humble man. Nor was his humility less conspicuous in his outward carriage toward others. Hence flowed that condescension and goodness,

that humanity and kindness, which could not but endear him to all who had the pleasure of conversing with him, and which rendered him venerable in a much higher degree than all the honours he received from the world." Great as his abilities were, and extraordinary as was the acceptance of his works in the world, he speaks concerning his compositions in verse in the humblest language. "I make no pretences," says he, "to the name of a poet, or a polite writer, in an age wherein so many superior souls shine in their works through the nation."

In a letter which he wrote to the author of the "Gentleman's Magazine," when his decision was requested upon the merits of several prize-poems on the subject of astronomy, which had been submitted to his judgment, the Doctor thus modestly expresses himself:—

Newington, Dec. 26th, 1734.

"THOUGH I have sported with rhyme as an amusement in younger life, and published some religious composures to assist the worship of God, yet I never set myself up among the numerous competitors for a poet of the age, much less have I presumed to become their judge. It is too great an honour, Sir, you have done me to place me in that situation, when I find myself so utterly unfit to execute such an office; and if I had ever been blessed with a capacity of this kind, yet

there is a certain limit and period to all mortal powers. The gay colours of imagery, and the sprightly relish of verse, die away, and vanish in my advancing age;* for I have almost left off to read or write what was once so engaging. One ought to preserve a quick sense of beauties and blemishes, and an elegant taste of sentiment and language, in order to pass a judgment on the labours of the Muses.

"I acknowledge your civility, Sir, and the respect of the gentlemen who have done me this honour. I wish in return I could adjudge the prizes to every one of them; for all have their peculiar merit."

He appeared to be nobly avaricious of his time, and ever watchful to improve it, suffering none of its sands to run down in vain. It is not unlikely but many of his pieces were the products of his thoughts while he was walking or riding. The poem called, "A Sight of Heaven in Sickness," he informed me was made on horseback; and I remember his telling me, that had he enjoyed the advantages in his younger years of such a situation as that of Lady Abney's seat at Stoke-Newington, (intending, no doubt, the spacious and delightful gardens and walks belonging to it, which would have been most propitious to his Muse,) where he

* The Doctor had now entered his sixty-first year.

had composed one piece of poetry, he should have written ten.

I am persuaded no person who lived to so great an age had fewer waste moments to account for than the Doctor. In his study, his delightful recess, his terrestrial paradise, he was always enlarging his stores of knowledge, or preparing them for a communication to the world. His conversation was such as in all respects became the man of wisdom, the man of God. His observations on others were deep and penetrating; and it is probable their excellencies or defects furnished him with hints for several papers in his "Miscellanies," in which the different characters of mankind are delineated, but so as to guard against any personal offence in a single instance. When he went abroad among the scenes of rural verdure, beauty, and fruitfulness, like the bee in its ranges for sweets, he was solicitous to gather fresh food for heavenly contemplation, or fresh materials and ornaments for future compositions. The pastures covered with flocks and herds, the fields waving with the ripening harvests, the groves resounding with the melody of the birds, enlivened his praises; and he saw, heard, and confessed his God in all. The skies by day struck his soul with admiration of the immense power, wisdom, and goodness of their divine Author; the moon and starry train by night increased his conceptions of Deity; and in the open manuscript of

God, the wide extended heavens, he read the letters of his great and wonderful name with profound homage and veneration. All that met his eye or ear was laid, as it were, under a perpetual tribute to yield him improvement, and consecrate and enrich his moments of leisure and necessary cessation from his studies. Nature was only a scale to his devout soul, by which to ascend to the knowledge and adoration of God.

That what is here said concerning the Doctor has the support of truth, I might produce in evidence what his sister Mrs. Brackstone herself told me of his endeavours, while he was at his father's, to lead the then young family, of which he was the eldest-born, into a knowledge of the wonderful works of God; my own observations of his manner of life for several years; and, above all, those of Mr. Parker, his amanuensis for more than twenty, and those of Mrs. Abney for near forty years: and I might strengthen the testimonies to his diligence in improving the various scenes of creation by an appeal to his Lyric Poems, his Miscellanies in Prose and Verse, and even his Songs for Children, several of whose themes are taken from the common appearances of nature: but I shall make no citations of this kind, as the truth is obvious to all who read them, and as I should quote, if I would make a collection of all his poems on these subjects, a great part of his poetical composures.

Let me adorn my page with an extract from that fine ode which makes a part of the first number of his "Miscellanies," in which he gives honour to God the Creator in the following strains :—

My God, I love, and I adore;
But saints who love would know thee more:
Wilt thou for ever hide, and stand
Behind the labours of thine hand?
Thy hand unseen sustains the poles
On which this huge creation rolls:
The starry arch proclaims thy power,
Thy pencil glows in every flower;
In thousand shapes and colours rise
Thy painted wonders to our eyes;
While beasts and birds with labouring throats
Teach us a God in thousand notes.
The meanest pin in nature's frame
Marks out some letter of thy name:
Where sense can reach, or fancy rove,
From hill to hill, from field to grove,
Across the waves, around the sky,
There's not a spot, or deep or high,
Where the Creator has not trod,
And left the footsteps of a God.

When he appeared in the pulpit, he had a very respectable and serious auditory. Though he had little or no action, yet there was such a rich vein of good sense and profitable instruction, there were such propriety, ease, and beauty in his language, such a freedom and at the same time correctness in his pronunciation, accompanied with an unaffected solemnity in the delivery of the

sacred and momentous truths, that his ministry was much attended, and he had a considerable church, and crowded congregation. His preparations for the pulpit were only the heads and particulars of his discourses, and some few hints under them; so that he preached partly from his notes, and partly without them. He wrote more in his preparations for the pulpit in younger life than he did in advanced years. Dr. Jennings thus expresses himself in his representation of him as a Preacher:—"It is no wonder that a man thus richly furnished with gifts and graces was an admired Preacher. Though his stature was low, and his bodily presence but weak, yet his preaching was weighty and powerful. There were a certain dignity and respect in his very aspect which commanded attention and awe; and when he spoke, such strains of truly Christian eloquence flowed from his lips, and these so apparently animated with zeal for God, and the most tender concern for souls and their everlasting salvation, as one would think could not be easily slighted or resisted."

It was remarkable, that he gave himself and his hearers proper rests at the end of his sentences, by no means throwing himself into any kind of hurry, or impetuous vehemence. He never seemed at a loss for matter or expression, and appeared to have a perpetual command of himself and his subject. I once asked him whe-

ther in his preaching he did not find himself sometimes too much awed by his auditory? He told me that when such a man, mentioning a gentleman of eminent abilities and learning, has come into the assembly, and taken his eye, that he has felt something like a momentary tremor upon him; but that he recovered himself by remembering what God said to the Prophet Jeremiah, chap. i. 17: "Be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them."

In prayer it might, perhaps, be truly said that he excelled himself. It was throughout an address to Deity, not in florid expressions, not in long and involved sentences, but in easy and unadorned language, and rather short and weighty periods. The Doctor informed me, he took pains with himself in younger life to shorten his sentences, and prevent a diffuse and luxuriant style; and with what happy success, his pulpit performances were a striking testimony, and, indeed, so were all his publications.

There was an extent in his addresses to Deity, which comprehended every proper subject; and at the same time such a brevity, though not so as to be disagreeably or affectedly sententious, in the representation of each of them, that at the conclusion of his prayer a hearer might find himself at a loss to conceive what more or less could have been said. The like pauses between sentence and sentence were observed by

him in prayer which he observed in preaching, if they were not rather longer. He was most serious in this part of sacred worship.

In his conversation, as he was far from discovering any thing like a high opinion of himself, so neither did he show any thing like a disposition to traduce or depreciate the characters and abilities of others; but on the other hand he would speak very honourably of persons whom he thought deserving praise. He had his opponents, and such as endeavoured to represent him in a disadvantageous light; but I never observed that their treatment drew from him any unkind reflections or censures in return. I well remember, upon a publication of his some few years before his death, he was attacked by one writer for going too much into one kind of theological sentiments, and by another for verging to the contrary. The remark the good man made upon his peculiar fate was, that "a moderator must expect to be boxed on both ears."

As to diet and drink he was very moderate and exemplary: he was so far from being in subjection to his appetite, that he was the very Sobrino he so finely describes as a temperate man and a philosopher, "who fed upon partridge and pheasant, venison and ragouts, and every delicacy, in a growing understanding, and a serene and healthy soul."

There was nothing in him which betrayed a

penurious temper, or any design and endeavour to lay up treasures on earth. He was rich, but it was in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate. The goodness of his heart discovered itself in acts of liberality and munificence; and, "I am credibly informed," says Dr. Jennings, "that from the time he was received into Sir Thomas Abney's family, he constantly devoted a third part of his income to charitable uses." In his last decays, when he was incapable of public service, he refused to receive his usual acknowledgments from the church of which he was Pastor; saying, that as he could not preach, he had no title to any salary. His refusal was not accepted, indeed, as it ought not to have been, as the church owed its increase so much to him, and as he had spent so great a part of his life in his ministry in it. But who can but admire this instance of his delicate sense of honour, and his noble superiority to the influence of worldly gain? It is but a just respect to Mr. Price, his colleague, to add that he strenuously opposed, and by no means would admit, the Doctor's declining his income, from the consideration of the obligations the interest at Berry-street lay under to him.

He never discovered any thing like a bitter zeal, or a narrow spirit, but cordially embraced all whom he esteemed the genuine disciples of his Lord; and no party names, nor variety of sentiments in matters of doubtful disputation, and

different modes of worship, could separate him in affection from such as he had reason to apprehend loved our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Accordingly, he maintained a free and friendly correspondence with Christians of various denominations. Though he judged the principles of the Nonconformists most favourable to Christian liberty, and their forms of worship most agreeable to the simplicity of the Gospel; yet he had a high esteem for the persons and writings of many in the established Church, as many of them, both in higher and lower stations, had for him and his writings; and some reverend personages of that communion presented him with their works, and accepted of his in return, on which as on other occasions very serious and affectionate letters have passed between them.

Nor should the Doctor's grateful acknowledgments of the favours he received, or the services which had been done him, be passed in silence. The dedication of his piece entitled, "The Art of reading and writing English," to the three young daughters of Sir Thomas Abney, thus expresses the lively sense he had of his obligations to his most generous benefactors, the worthy gentleman and lady in whose house he resided:—"My honoured young friends, when it pleased God to afford me the first degrees of release from a long and tiresome weakness, I thought myself bound to make my best acknowledgments of that

uncommon generosity and kindness of your honoured parents, by which I was first invited into your family, and my health began to be restored. Nor could I do any thing more grateful to them, nor pleasing to myself, than offer my assistance in some part of your education, while I was incapable of more public work. I began, therefore, at the first principles of learning, that I might have an opportunity to correct any lesser mistakes of your youngest years, and so perfect your knowledge of our mother-tongue; for this purpose, when I found no spelling-book sufficient to answer my designs, I wrote many of these directions; but my health was so imperfect that I was not able at that time to transcribe and finish this little book, which was designed for you. Thus it lay by neglected some years, till a charity-school arose at Cheshunt in Hertfordshire, raised and supported by the diffusive goodness of your family, in concert with the pious neighbourhood. Then was I requested, and even provoked, to put the last hand to this work, for the better instruction of the children that were taught there; though, I must confess, it has grown up under my reviews of it to a much larger size than I ever intended. But, ladies, I take the freedom to make you my sole patronesses in this affair; for I scarce know any thing else that can effectually defend me for laying out so many hours in these rudiments of learning, but a desire to be useful in lesser ser-

vices while I am cut off from greater, and the duty of gratitude to an excellent household, where so many years of my affliction have been attended with so rich a variety of conveniences and benefits; and, now I ask your leave to offer it to the public. May the valuable lives of Sir Thomas Abney, and his honoured Lady, be prolonged as blessings to the world, while the kindness they have shown me is signally and plentifully rewarded from heaven with blessings on all your heads; and may the little share I have had in assisting your education, be improved by divine providence and grace, to your temporal and everlasting welfare! So prays your affectionate instructer, and obliged humble servant, Isaac Watts."

So ardent and inextinguishable was his gratitude to Lady Abney and her family, that he mingles his acknowledgments of the favours he had received from them in his will, when he mentions "the generous and tender care shown him by her Ladyship, and her family, in his long illness many years ago, when he was capable of no service, and also her eminent friendship and goodness during his continuance in the family ever since."

The same soul which glowed with gratitude, was also eminent for its friendship. Accordingly, the Doctor, who thus acknowledges his obligations to Lady Abney in one part of his will, in another passage thus expresses his fraternal love and honour to the Rev. Samuel Price, who had

been assistant to him ten years, and afterwards his co-Pastor thirty-five. He styles him "his faithful friend and companion in the labours of the ministry;" and mentions a legacy which he leaves him "as only a small testimony of his great affection for him, on account of his services of love during the many harmonious years of their fellowship in the work of the Gospel." And herein he only gave a testimony in death to that esteem and affection he had professed towards him in the dedication, dated February 21st, 1720–1, to his people of his sermons on various subjects, divine and moral, where he says, that "he could not conceal his joy that his kind and faithful companion in the service of their souls, practises his ministry with the same views and designs, (namely, the glory of God, and the good of souls,) and that he had been sensibly owned and assisted of God to support and build up the church during his long confinement. His labours," adds the Doctor, "both for you and for me shall ever endear him both to you and me." The same dedication furnishes another proof of the deep sense of love and friendship which possessed the Doctor's heart; for he thus writes to his church: "It is in the service of your souls, I have spent the best period of my life ministering the Gospel among you. Two-and-twenty years are now expired since you first called me to this delightful work; and from that time my cares and labours, my

studies and prayers, have been employed on your behalf. I trust they have been accepted with God, and, through his Almighty blessing, have obtained some success. As to their acceptance with you, I have too many and plain evidences to admit a doubt of it, which I have often thankfully acknowledged to God and you. Your forward kindness hath always forbid my requests; nor do I remember that you ever gave me leave to ask any thing at your hands by your constant anticipation of all which I could reasonably desire. While I was thus walking with you in the fellowship of the Gospel, with mutual delight, God was pleased to weaken my strength in the way; and thereby has given you a fairer opportunity to show the vigour of your affection under my long weakness and confinement. Your diligence and zeal in maintaining public worship in the church, under the pastoral care of my dear brother and colleague; your special days and hours of prayer for my recovery; your constant and fervent addresses to the throne of grace on my account in your weekly solemn assemblies; and your cheerful supplies of my necessities under so tedious an affliction, have made me your debtor in a high degree, and have strengthened the bands of my duty by adding to them the bands of your love." And presently after: "I think I can pronounce it with great sincerity, that there is no place, nor company, nor employment on this side heaven that can give

me such a relish of delight, as when I stand ministering in holy things to you."

In his conversation the Doctor never appeared to be at any loss for thought or expression. Indeed, no person with whom I was ever acquainted spoke with more ease, readiness, and elegance than he did; and, as his discourse flowed like a clear full stream from an inexhaustible fountain, so it was very instructive and entertaining. I have been at some pains to collect some proofs of this kind, the much greater part of which are taken from the register of my own memory:—

"I look upon the Apostle Paul and Cicero to be the greatest geniuses that ever appeared in our world.—Dr. Owen excelled as an experimental, and Mr. Baxter as a practical, Divine.—The greatest Preachers in my younger time were Mr. John Howe, and Mr. Thomas Gouge,* whose (that is, Mr. Gouge's) strength lay in the illustration of

* Accordingly, we find both these Ministers eminently distinguished by the Doctor in his Lyric Poems. How exquisitely fine is that compliment paid Mr. Howe in his ode to him!

"Great man, permit the Muse to climb,
And seat her at thy feet," &c.;

importing that the Muse, after she had mounted, and soared to the highest pitch her wings could elevate her, could ascend no higher than to sit at his feet. The closing lines in his elegy on Mr. Gouge contain also an encomium of the first magnitude upon Mr. Howe, where, in the rapture of his Muse, and the height of his affection and esteem, the Doctor says,

Scripture.—Mr. Stennet, the Rev. Mr. Joseph Stennet, grandfather of the present truly amiable Dr. Samuel Stennet, was in his preaching like a silver stream which ran along without bush or stones to interrupt it.—What a change did Mr. Eames experience! but a few hours between his lecturing to his pupils, and his hearing the lectures of angels.—If in your preaching," (to a young Minister,) "you perceive you make a mistake, do not go back to rectify it. Many of the congregation may not notice it, and they who do will excuse it; but if you try to amend it, you

"Howe is a great and single name;
Amidst the crowd he stands alone;
He stands, but with his starry pinions on,
Drest for the flight, and ready to be gone.
Eternal God, command his stay,
Stretch the dear months of his delay:
O we could wish his age was one immortal day!
But when the flaming chariot 's come,
And shining guards, to' attend the prophet home,
Amidst a thousand weeping eyes,
Send an Elisha down, a soul of equal size,
Or burn this worthless globe, and take us to the skies."

As to Mr. Gouge, he has honoured him with a long and noble elegy. Concerning whom it may be proper to observe, that he was not the Thomas Gouge ejected from St. Sepulchre's, London, by the Act of Uniformity, 1660, and whose funeral sermon was preached by Dr., afterwards Archbishop, Tillotson, so far back as November, 1681; but another Minister, who was Pastor of a church of Protestant Dissenters meeting near the Three Cranes, Thames-street, London, and who was succeeded by Dr. Thomas Ridgley.

expose it to the observation of all.—I could wish young Ministers in the country might be allowed by their people to read a part of Mr. Henry's exposition of the Bible, or repeat a sermon from some good author, one part of the Lord's day; as it is certainly too much for them to compose two sermons a week so early in life.—One of the darkest mysteries in Providence is, that God should suffer a worthless and wicked man to have the absolute dominion over nations of mankind.—Never mind spoiling a well-turned period, if you may but have the hope of reaching a conscience. Polished and harmonious language is oftentimes like oil flowing smoothly over marble, which leaves no traces behind it.*—Poor mankind are like feeble riders set on wild horses.—The multitude go in a track, not where they should go, but where others go.—I know not but my days of restraint and confinement by affliction may appear my brightest days, when I come to take

* This direction was given in a charge I heard the Doctor deliver, at the ordination of the Rev. Mr. Samuel Snashall, at Stoke-Newington, about July, if I mistake not, 1738. I well remember also that the Minister who prayed over Mr. Snashall, before the Doctor gave the charge, made use of this Scripture expression, "Lord, we remember our faults this day." The Doctor took notice of it, as falling from the lips of his reverend brother, and approved, and adopted it into his preface to his charge, in the easiest and happiest manner. Such was his ready and immediate command of thought and

a review of them in the light of heaven.—St. Paul's thorn in the flesh, mentioned 2 Cor. xii. 7, was the debilitated state of his nerves occasioned by the overpowering glories of heaven; whence, I conclude," said he, "that the Apostle was in the body when he was caught up into paradise.*—I had rather be the author of Mr. Baxter's 'Call to the Unconverted,' than the author of Milton's 'Paradise Lost.'—Should an Heathen be convinced of his sins, humbly and penitentially confess them before God, and implore his mercy, he would, in my opinion, be accepted of him, as he was prepared for receiving grace, and only wanted the object of faith to be revealed to him.—It seems quite reasonable and fit, that there should be a general diffusion and reign of the Gospel; and that for some considerable continuance before the end of time, as there has been such a general dominion of sin and misery for so many ages in our world."

Such was the substance, I pretend not to recollect the exact words, of some of the Doctor's occasional observations and speeches; to which I will add some critical remarks, which I also gathered from his conversation, and which may not be unacceptable to the public.

* The Doctor's conjecture agrees with what the Apostle says concerning himself, that "he was with the Corinthians in weakness, and in fear, and much trembling." 1 Cor. ii. 3.

Dr. Young's description of the peacock, in his poetical paraphrase of some of the last chapters of the book of Job, he styles "admirable" in his works; but he particularly mentioned to me, how much he was pleased with the latter part of that line,

"Gives all his colours and adorns the day."

Not the day adorning the peacock, but the peacock adorning the day; but as to Dr. Young's "Night Thoughts," he pleasantly said, "that they had too much of the darkness of the night in them." In the Rev. John Norris's ode, entitled "The Meditation," or, in other words, a view of death, the Doctor commended the close of the second stanza:—

"Amazing state! No wonder that we dread
To think of death or view the dead:
Thou 'rt all wrapt up in clouds, as if to thee
Our very knowledge had antipathy:
Death could not a more sad retinue find,
Sickness and pain before, and darkness all behind:"—

observing that the expressions, "darkness all behind," are a very just representation of our ignorance of the state beyond death. But he was displeased with the next stanza:—

"Some courteous ghost, tell this great secrecy,
What 'tis you are and we must be:
You warn us of approaching death, and why
May we not know from you what 'tis to die?

But you, having shot the gulf, delight to see
Succeeding souls plunge in with like uncertainty."

His objection was, that the last lines conveyed a sentiment quite improper, and incongruous to the ideas it becomes us to form concerning pious, benevolent spirits in their separate state. I will also mention on this head,—the Doctor's criticisms,—his illustration of that passage in Job xli. 18, where it is said concerning the crocodile, that "his eyes are like the eye-lids of the morning." "In the morning you may sometimes observe," said he, "upon the edge of the horizon, a bright opening of the day, and above it a black, scowling cloud. The bright opening of the day is not unlike an eye, and the incumbent cloud is not unlike an eye-lid; and hence the poetic ground for the expression, 'the eye-lids of the morning.'" I know not where to find a more proper place than the present connexion, for inserting a remark which he made upon two or three stanzas in his imitation of the "Psalms of David," the only time, to the best of my recollection, I ever heard him so much as hint any thing which might seem to convey a good opinion of what he had ever written. The stanzas I refer to are in his version, or imitation, of the seventh psalm.

If I had e'er provoked then
Or once abused my foe,
Then let him tread my life in dust,
And lay mine honour 'ow;

If there be malice found in me,
I know thy piercing eyes;
I should not dare appeal to thee,
Nor ask my God to rise:

Arise, my God, lift up thine hand,
Their pride and power control;
Awake to judgment, and command
Deliverance for my soul.

There is the strongest declaration of innocence which can possibly be imagined in the line,

"Arise, my God, lift up thine hand,"

immediately succeeding the Psalmist's saying, that "he should not dare to appeal to him, if he harboured any malice against his enemies;" so that, at the same time the holy man presents his prayer to God, he, without the least doubtfulness, asserts his own integrity.

I will subjoin to these criticisms of the Doctor upon written compositions, an observation which he made upon a performance in painting; to which art he was by no means a stranger, as he found leisure to employ his pencil amidst all the greater labours of his pen. In that Cartoon of Raphael's where St. Paul is represented preaching at Athens, the Apostle is drawn stretching out his hands to their utmost length towards heaven, while the people are held in the most deep and devout attention below. "I will tell you," said the Doctor, "what St. Paul is saying, 'Behold, he comes.'" And were we to think as long as we

will, we could not, perhaps, conceive any words more suitable to the aspect and attitude of the speaker, and the solemnity reigning upon the countenances of the hearers.

Perhaps, it may not be without its benefit if I should add to the Doctor's remarks, some occasional speeches which he had gathered from others. "Young man," said Sir Edmund King to him in his early life, "I hear that you make verses. Let me advise you never to do it but when you cannot help it." "If a man would be a great man," said Sir Richard Blackmore, "he must join the keenness of the razor, and the strength of the axe." Dr. Owen used to say in his advanced age, "that he would gladly part with all the learning he had acquired by sitting up late at study, in younger life, if he could but regain the health he had lost by it." "That is an excellent observation," said the Doctor, "of Thomas à Kempis, that it does not require much ingenuity to be a Christian."

He possessed a large portion of wit, perhaps few persons so much; but he never seemed in the least degree fond of displaying it; and much less in the way of satire. Wit fell from him like occasional fire from heaven; and, like the ethereal flame, was ever vivid and penetrating.

Just at the entrance of his study, on the outside, appeared the following lines of Horace, printed, and hung up in a frame :—

Absentem qui rodit amicum
Qui non defendit, alio culpante; solutos
Qui captat risus hominum, famamque dicacis,
Fingere qui non visa potest, commissa tacere
Qui nequit, hic niger est; hunc tu, Romane, caveto.

HORAT.

IN ENGLISH.

"He who against an absent friend inveighs,
Or, when attack'd, will not protect his praise;
He in whose converse biting jests abound,
At others' cost who sends the laugh around;
He who with impudence deals out his lies,
And says he saw what never met his eyes;
He who still talks and talks, or right or wrong,
And glories in his flippancy of tongue;
He who betrays through levity of mind
The important secret to his breast consign'd;
This man is black indeed: avoid the pest,
Nor let your doors admit him for your guest."

The spaces in the Doctor's study where there were no shelves were abundantly covered with prints of considerable persons, mostly Divines. On one side of the large and high panel over the fire-place a piece of white paper was framed, and hung up amidst the portraits, with part of a line from Horace,

Locus est pluribus umbris.

ENGLISHED.

"Though numerous pictures spread these panels round,
Yet here and there a vacant space is found."

And on the other side of the panel another piece of white paper, alike encircled with pictures,

was in the same manner framed, and hung up to view, with a Latin line, as I suppose, of the Doctor's own composition.

Quis me doctorum propriâ dignabitur umbrâ ?

ENGLISHED.

"What son of learning will increase my store,
And to these worthies add one worthy more ?"

A very inoffensive, genteel, and perhaps successful method of procuring an addition to his illustrious shades.

I will close the chapter when I have added the Latin verses which he most probably composed for his own picture, and which are, accordingly, placed under it:—

In Christo mea vita latet, mea gloria Christus,
Hunc lingua, hunc calamus celebrat, nec imago tacebit.
In uno Jesu omnia.

ENGLISHED.

"In Christ my life is safe reposed,
I glory in his name;
Him, whom my tongue and pen disclosed,
My portrait shall proclaim.
Jesus! my whole felicity
Is centred and comprised in thee."

Such was the character of Dr. Watts as a Christian and Minister, and these were the graces and virtues with which this extraordinary man was adorned. He sometimes discovered a quick emotion and hastiness of temper, and would speak with a manifest degree of keenness and

poignancy; but effervescences of this kind might, at least in part, be owing to the disagreeable sensations occasioned by the weakness and disorder of his body: however, they were quite momentary, and he soon returned to his former possession and placid dignity of soul. On the whole, if he had his spots, they were, like those of the sun, abundantly compensated by superior glories.

CHAPTER VI.

Dr. Jennings in his funeral sermon says, that he questions whether any author before Dr. Watts ever appeared with reputation on such a variety of subjects as he has done, both as a prose writer and a poet. "However," adds he, "this I may venture to say, that there is no man now living, of whose works so many have been diffused at home and abroad, which are in such constant use, and translated into such a variety of languages; many of which, I doubt not, will remain more durable monuments of his great talents than any representation I can make of them, though it were to be graven on pillars of brass. Thus did he shine as an ingenious man and a scholar."

Perspicuity is most eminent in all Dr. Watts's works; and perhaps no author ever excelled him in this first excellence of composition. Whatever

he discourses upon, be it a theme of morality, a question in philosophy, or the sublimest doctrine of religion, he is every where clear and easy to be understood. He is so far from writing obscurely upon a common subject, that he brings down the highest subjects to the level of a common capacity by the perspicuous manner in which he treats them: a prime felicity indeed, which might be owing to his own clear and distinct ideas; to his deep investigation and complete knowledge of the subjects upon which he wrote; to his large acquaintance with the English language; to his avoiding terms of science and art, obsolete expressions, and words of foreign derivation not familiar to the generality of mankind; to his guarding against a penurious conciseness of style on the one hand, and an ungoverned luxuriance on the other, by the first of which extremes his meaning might be obscured, or not be fully represented for want of a sufficient quantity of words, and by the last of which he might have been carried into a tedious labyrinth through which a common reader might not have been able to follow him; or this perspicuity might sometimes take its rise from the apt and well-chosen comparisons so frequent in the Doctor's writings, which illustrate, at the same time that they enliven and adorn, his compositions.

Some writers of the first merit for excellent matter have rendered their compositions hard to

be understood, and so, in some measure, diminished their usefulness, for want of attending to this point, the restraint of their sentences to a moderate length. They begin a sentence, thoughts rise upon thoughts, and they are accordingly communicated in clusters; something needs explanation, something to be guarded; for these purposes they have recourse to parentheses, and all this is done before the sentence is concluded. Whereas, had they distributed their matter into two or more periods, they would have preserved all their ideas, and would have been comprehended at once by their readers.

The Doctor has himself treated upon this point, the advantage of a confined style, to secure perspicuity, in his second part of the "Improvement of the Mind," chap. ii., sec. 6. "A long and tedious style," says he, "is very improper for a teacher; for this also lessens the perspicuity of it. Some learned writers are never satisfied unless they fill up every sentence with a great number of ideas and sentiments. They swell their propositions to an enormous size by explications, exceptions, and precautions, lest they should be mistaken, and crowd them all into the same period. They involve and darken their discourse by many a parenthesis, and prolong their sentences to a tiresome extent beyond the reach of a common comprehension. Such sort of writers or speakers may be rich in knowledge, but they

are seldom fit to communicate it. He that would gain a happy talent for the instruction of others, must know how to disentangle and divide his thoughts, if too many are ready to crowd into one paragraph, and let him rather speak three sentences distinctly and clearly, which the hearer receives at once with his ears and his soul, than crowd all the thoughts into one sentence, which the hearer has forgotten before he can understand it."

Near akin to the excellence of perspicuity of language is that of ease or freedom. In this also he excels. His discourses are like streams devolving from a fountain, or rays descending from the sun. There is nothing like labour or study in the construction of his sentences, but he seems to write in the same language in which he would have spoken. Happy attainment! Attainment I call it; for, however great the Doctor's native genius was, it must have cost him no small attention and care to form and habituate himself to a style which appears to be spontaneous, and a natural conveyance of his ideas without confusion, obscurity, or diminution.

As the above excellencies of composition are nobly exemplified in his writings, so they have been distinguished by the Doctor with the praises they merit, in the following passage:—"When a man," says he, "speaks with much freedom and ease, and gives his opinion in the plainest lan-

guage of common sense, do not presently imagine you shall gain nothing by his company. Sometimes you will find a person, who, in his conversation or his writings, delivers his thoughts in so plain, so easy, so familiar, and perspicuous a manner, that you both understand and assent to what he says as fast as you can read or hear it. Hereupon, some readers have been ready to conclude in haste, Surely this man says nothing but common things. I knew as much before: I could have said all this myself. This is a frequent mistake. Pellucido was a very great genius. When he spoke in the senate he was wont to convey his ideas in so simple and happy a manner, as to instruct and convince every hearer, and to enforce the conviction through the whole illustrious assembly; and that with so much evidence, you would have been ready to wonder that every one who spoke had not said the same things. But Pellucido was the only man who could do this; the only speaker who had attained this art and honour." Such is the writer of whom Horace would say,

Ut sibi quivis
Speret idem, sudet multùm, frustràque laboret
Ausus idem

HORAT. *de Arte Poeticâ.*

"Smooth be your style, and plain and natural,
To strike the sons of Wapping and Whitehall.
While others think this easy to attain,
Let them but try, and with their utmost pain
They 'll sweat and strive to imitate in vain."

Let a person read one of Mr. Addison's papers in the "Spectator," or one of Dr. Watts's numbers in his "Miscellanies," and he shall find the periods flow so smooth and easy, that he shall imagine it to be no difficulty to compose in the same manner; but let him but make the experiment, and he will soon be convinced that he must have a portion of the same genius to enable him to acquit himself with the like success.

Our next article of observation upon the Doctor's writings is that of dignity. Though he steers his flight within the view of all, and sometimes stoops in the lowest condescension, especially in his "Catechisms for young Children," yet when does he ever sink into meanness, or debase his composures by any thing puerile or trifling? Where are there any words low and grovelling, and at the highest only just admissible into conversation, to be found in all his works? Where are there any trite and hackneyed proverbs, of too coarse a texture to be woven into discourses of religion and virtue? Where are there any puns or jingles, affected antitheses, fantastic conceits, or disgusting levities? And, though his similes may be sometimes taken from common life, or common scenes, yet, as wrought up by him, they appear in becoming grandeur. I will not venture to affirm that in the numerous treatises he has published, there is not so much as a single instance in any of the particulars of debasement that have

been mentioned to be met with; yet I may be bold to say that he has upon the whole most happily avoided them, and this too amidst his constant regards to perspicuity and freedom.

There is another article which may be ranged under dignity, in which the Doctor also excels: I mean, the harmony of his metaphors and comparisons. Nothing is more offensive to a hearer or reader of taste, than to find the tropes of rhetoric, when they are carried out into any length, confused and jarring, or made up of images snatched in violation of all propriety from contrary objects, and absurdly huddled together. This incongruity is what Quintilian so justly censures when he says, that "many have set out with a tempest and ended with a conflagration; the effect of which has been a shameful inconsistency." And the "Spectator" passes the like just censure upon it, when he tells us, that "an unskilful author shall run metaphors so absurdly into one another, that there shall be no simile, no agreeable picture, no apt resemblance, but confusion, obscurity, and noise. Thus have I known an hero compared to a thunderbolt, a lion, and the sea; all and each of them proper metaphors for impetuosity, courage, or force; but by bad management it has so happened that the thunderbolt has overflowed its banks, the lion has darted through the skies, and the billows have rolled out of the Lybian desert." But where are any such metaphors

or comparisons observable in the Doctor's writings? I know not of one; but it were easy to refer to a great variety that open, flow on, and conclude, with the most beautiful harmony. If I should not dwell too long on this particular excellency, I would recite a few examples, which as they adorn the Doctor's pages may adorn mine. "What uneasy creatures are we made by our various passions! How often do they disquiet and torment the soul! How headstrong is their violence, like a horse unbroken and untamed! How sudden are their starts! their motions how wild and various! And how unruly are their efforts! Now if one had but one sovereign bridle, which could reach and manage them all, one golden rein, which would hold in all their unruly motions, and which would also excite and guide them at pleasure, what an invaluable instrument would this be to mortals! Surely such an instrument is the love of God, such an invaluable regulator of all the passionate powers; and it will have this effect where it is, as it ought to be, strong and supreme." Again: "To employ the passions for God is to take a most powerful engine out of the hands of sin and Satan, and reduce it to the obedience of Christ. It is the recovery of a considerable part of human nature out of dismal captivity and bondage. The passions are the warmest and strongest powers of the soul. They are the artillery whereby man wages war for or against

heaven. The passions are by nature devoted to the service of sin, and engaged on the devil's side in his wars against the Almighty; and they are charged with the seeds of impious fire and thunder; but, when divine grace has taken hold of them, and employed them on the side of God and religion, it is like seizing the cannon of the enemy from their old batteries, and planting them in new bulwarks, to make war upon the devil and all his army." How apt and how well-conducted is that simile which the Doctor adopts, when, after he had said that a teacher should not only observe the different spirit and humour among his scholars, but should watch the various efforts of their reason, and growth of their understanding, he goes on, and adds "that he should practise in his young nursery of learning, as a skilful gardener does in his vegetable dominions, and apply prudent methods of cultivation to every plant. Let him with a discreet and gentle hand nip or prune the irregular shoots; let him guard and encourage the tender buds of the understanding till they be raised to a blossom; and let him kindly cherish the younger fruits." "The love of God," says he, "is a flower of divine original, and of the growth of paradise. If the Holy Spirit has planted it in your heart, let not any other love be planted too near it, nor too much nourished, lest it draw away the vital moisture, and cause the love of God to languish and wither." I will

add one more allegory, or chain of metaphors, in which there appears a like beautiful consistency. "A young bright genius," says the Doctor, "who has furnished himself with a variety of truths and strong arguments, but yet is unacquainted with the world, goes forth from the schools, like a knight-errant presuming bravely to vanquish the follies of men, and to scatter light and truth through all his acquaintance. But he meets with huge giants and enchanted castles, strong prepossessions of mind, habits, customs, education, authority, interest, together with all the various passions of men armed and obstinate to defend their old opinions, and he is strangely disappointed in his generous attempts. He finds now that he must not trust merely to the sharpness of his steel, and the strength of his arms, but that he must manage the weapons of his reason with much dexterity and artifice, with skill and address, or he shall never be able to subdue errors, and to convince mankind."

There is another excellency in his compositions which deserves particular notice, that of ardour or animation. Though in opening, illustrating, explaining, proving, and the like, he is calm and cool, yet when he means to enforce and effectually persuade, what vehemence, what flame, what rapture, not unlike the eloquence of Demosthenes, whom Longinus compares to a thunderbolt; or of Cicero, whom the same great critic resembles to a

conflagration. I will produce an instance or two of this kind. Under a remark of the Doctor's how much it is the business of a Minister of the Gospel to engage the affections of the hearers, and to bring them over to the service of God and religion, after he has taken notice of the animation which runs through the writings of the Prophets, and the discourses of our Lord and his Apostles, he thus gives the reins to his divine oratory:— "Can any of us now content ourselves to bring cold and languid discourses into the pulpit with this Bible under our hands? Will not all the sacred fervours of these inspired Preachers reproach us to our faces, while we read and explain their sermons? Shall we go to affect a calm and stupid politeness of phrase in the very face of these warm and heavenly orators? Can we be content any longer to be the cold and lifeless rehearsers of the great and glorious things of our religion? Can we go on to speak to perishing sinners, who lie drowsy and slumbering on the brink of hell, in so soft, so calm, and gentle a manner, as though we were afraid to awaken them? What shall we say to these things? Does divine love send dreaming Preachers to call dead sinners to life? Preachers who are content to leave their hearers asleep on the brink of eternal destruction? Have they no such thing as passion belongs to them? Have they no pity, no fear? Have they no sense of the worth of souls? Have they no

springs of affection within them? Or, do they think their hearers have not? Or, is passion so vile a power that it must all be devoted to flesh and sense, and must never be applied to objects divine and heavenly? Who taught any of us this lazy and drowsy practice? Did God or his Prophets, did Christ or his Apostles, instruct us in this modish art of still life, this lethargy of preaching, as it has been called by a late writer? Did the great God ever appoint statues for his ambassadors to invite sinners to his mercy? Words of grace written upon brass or marble would do the work almost as well. Where the Preachers become stone, no wonder if the hearers are moveless. But let the Ministers of the living word, who address men upon matters of infinite concernment, show, if possible, that they are infinitely concerned about them."

In like manner the Doctor, showing how ineffectual discourses on the excellency of virtue would be to reform mankind without awakening their hopes and fears by promises and threats, thus addresses Lord Shaftesbury under the name of Rhapsodus, who affirms, "that neither the fear of future punishment, nor the hope of future reward, can possibly be called good affections." "Go dress up," says the Doctor, "all the virtues of human nature in all the beauties of your oratory, and declaim aloud on the praise of social virtue and the amiable qualities of goodness, till your hearts

or lungs ache, among the looser herds of mankind, and you will ever find, as your heathen fathers have done before you, that the wild appetites and passions of men are too violent to be restrained by such mild and silken language. You may as well build up a fence of straw and feathers to resist a cannon-ball, or try to quench a flaming granado with a shell of fair water, as hope to succeed in these attempts. But an eternal heaven and an eternal hell carry divine force and power with them. This doctrine from the mouth of Christian Preachers has begun the reformation of multitudes. This Gospel has recovered thousands among the nations from iniquity and death. They have been awakened by these awful scenes to begin religion; and afterwards their virtue has improved itself into superior and more refined principles and habits by divine grace, and risen to high and eminent degrees, though not to a consummate state. The blessed God knows human nature better than Rhapsodus doth, and has throughout his word appointed a more proper and more effectual method of address to it by the passions of hope and fear, by punishments and rewards."

A fifth excellence observable in the Doctor's writings, and which he possesses in an uncommon measure, is that of plenitude of ideas. What subject is there upon which he has written, however dry and unpromising it might seem, but

what under his culture has from a barren naked spot been turned into a field or garden of universal verdure and bloom? Is there not evident in all his works an originality of thought? Or is there not something said, and that very pertinent and proper, upon the subjects which he discusses, which never occurred to us before, or at least never appeared in so bright and pleasing a dress? This excellency I may style a distinguishing excellence in his writings; and it is, if I mistake not, eminently conspicuous in his descriptions, of which I shall give a few, and but a few, specimens.

Would he open to his readers wherein the nature of prudence lies, how happily has he defined it when he says, "Prudence consists in judging well what is to be said, and what is to be done, on every new occasion; when to lie still, and when to be active; when to keep silence, and when to speak; what to avoid, and what to pursue; how to act in every difficulty; what means to make use of to compass such an end; how to behave in every circumstance of life, and in all companies; how to gain the favour of mankind in order to promote our own happiness, and to do the most service to God, and the most good to men, according to that station we possess, and those opportunities we enjoy."

After he has enumerated the ornaments and accomplishments of life, proper for persons in younger life, such as grammar, logic, geome-

try, geography, astronomy, natural philosophy, history, and poetry, &c., he concludes with a description of the finishing beauties, which he would wish to find in young persons. "But, among all the accomplishments of youth, there is none preferable," says he, "to a decent and agreeable behaviour among men, a modest freedom of speech, a graceful and lowly deportment, a cheerful gravity and good humour, with a mind ever serene under the ruffling accidents of human life. Add to this, a pleasing solemnity and reverence when the discourse turns upon any thing sacred and divine, a becoming neglect of injuries, a hatred of calumny and slander, a habit of speaking well of others, a pleasing benevolence and readiness to do good to mankind, and special compassion to the miserable, with an air and countenance, in a natural and unaffected manner, expressive of all these excellent qualifications. Some of these," he adds, "are to be numbered among the duties and virtues of mankind; but they must be confessed to be ornaments as well as virtues. They are graces in the eye of man as well as God. These will bespeak the affection of all who know us, and engage even an ill-natured world betimes in our favour. These will enable the youth of both sexes, who are so happy as to attain them, to enter upon the stage of life with approbation and love; to pass through the world with ease, as far as ease may be expected in so degenerate and

unhappy a state of things; to finish the scenes of action on earth with applause; and leave behind them the monument of a good name, when their bodies sleep in the dust, and their souls dwell with God."

The description he gives of poetry in its powers and pleasures, is such as may well charm us with its beauty, at the same time it convinces us of the benefit of a good acquaintance with those writers who have most excelled in that noble art. "Nor is this a mere amusement or useless embroidery of the mind. It brightens and animates the fancy with a thousand beautiful images; it enriches the soul with many great and sublime sentiments, and refined ideas; it fills the memory with a noble variety of language, and furnishes the tongue with speech and expression suited to every subject. It teaches the art of describing well, and of painting every thing to the life, and dressing up all the pleasing and frightful scenes of nature and providence, vice and virtue, in their proper charms and horrors. It assists us in the art of persuasion; it leads us into a pathetical manner of speech and writing, and adds life and beauty to conversation." Thunder and lightning, both at distance and near at hand, are admirably represented by him in the following description:—"When we hear the thunder rumbling in some distant quarter of the heavens, we sit calm and serene amidst our business or diversions; we feel no terrors about us, and

apprehend no danger. When we see the slender streaks of lightning play afar off in the horizon of an evening sky, we look on and amuse ourselves as with an agreeable spectacle without the least fear or concern. But, lo, the dark cloud rises by degrees; it grows black as night, and big with tempests; it spreads, as it rises to the mid heaven, and now hangs directly over us; the flashes of lightning grow broad and strong, and, like sheets of ruddy fire, they blaze terribly all round the hemisphere. We bar the doors and windows and every avenue of light, but we bar them all in vain; the flames break in at every cranny, and threaten swift destruction. The thunder follows, bursting from the cloud with sudden and tremendous clashes; the voice of the Lord is redoubled with violence, and overwhelms us with terror; it rattles over our heads, as though the whole house was broken down at once with a stroke from heaven, and were tumbling on us amain to bury us in the ruins. Happy the man whose hope in his God composes all his passions amidst these storms of nature, and renders his whole deportment peaceful and serene amidst the frights and hurries of weak spirits and unfortified minds!"

I shall close the specimen of the Doctor's eminent talents for description, in which he has ideas at command to enable him to say enough, and judgment to teach him when to say no more, with that admirable meditation of his "For the

First of May." "What astonishing variety of artifices, what innumerable millions of exquisite works, is the God of nature engaged in every moment! How gloriously are his all-pervading wisdom and power employed in this season of the year, this spring of nature! What infinite myriads of vegetable beings is he forming this very moment in their roots and branches, in their leaves and blossoms, their seeds and fruits! Some, indeed, began to discover their bloom amidst the snows of January, or under the rough cold blasts of March. Those flowers are withered and vanished in April, and their seeds are now ripening to perfection. Others are showing themselves this day in all their blooming pride and beauty, and, while they adorn the gardens and meadows with gay and glowing colours, they promise their fruits in the days of harvest. The whole nation of vegetables is under the divine care and culture; his hands form them day and night with admirable skill and unceasing operation, according to the natures he first gave them; and he produces their buds and foliage, their flowery blossoms and rich fruit, in their appointed months. Their progress in life is exceeding swift at this season of the year, and their successive appearances and sweet changes of raiment are visible almost hourly. But these creatures are of lower life, and give but feebler displays of the Maker's wisdom. Let us raise our contemplations another story, and

survey a nobler theatre of divine wonders. What endless armies of animals is the hand of God moulding and figuring this moment throughout his brutal dominion! What immense flights of little birds are now fermenting in the egg, heaving and growing towards shape and life! What vast flocks of four-footed creatures, what droves of large cattle, are now forming in their early embryos, imprisoned in the dark cells of nature; and others, perhaps, moving towards liberty, and just preparing to see the light! What unknown myriads of insects in their various cradles and nesting-places are now working towards vitality and motion, and thousands of them with their painted wings just beginning to unfurl, and expand themselves into fluttering and day-light, while other families of them have forsaken their husky beds, and exult and glitter in the warm sun-beams!

"An exquisite world of wonders is complicated even in the body of every little insect,—an ant, a gnat, a mite, which is scarce visible to the naked eye. Admirable engines! which a whole academy of philosophers could never contrive; which the nation of poets have neither art nor colours to describe; nor has a world of mechanics skill enough to frame the plainest or coarsest of them. Their nerves, their muscles, and the minute atoms which compose the fluids fit to run in the little channels of their veins, escape the notice

of the most sagacious mathematician with all his aid of glasses. The active powers and curiosity of human nature are limited in their pursuit, and must be content to lie down in ignorance. Hitherto shall ye go, and no further.

"It is a sublime and constant triumph over all the intellectual powers of man, which the great God maintains every moment in these inimitable works of nature, in these impenetrable recesses and mysteries of divine art; and the month of May is the most shining season of this triumph. The flags and banners of almighty wisdom are now displayed round half the globe, and the other half waits the return of the sun to spread the same triumph over the southern world. This very sun in the firmament is God's prime minister in this wondrous world of beings; and he works with sovereign vigour on the surface of the earth, and spreads his influences deep under the clods to every root and fibre, moulding them into their proper forms by divine direction. There is not a plant, nor a leaf, nor one little branching thread above or beneath the ground, which escapes the eye or influence of this beneficent star: an illustrious emblem of the omnipresence and universal activity of the Creator."

Quintilian observes, concerning Horace, that "he is remarkably pure and polished in his numbers, and eminent for his observation of the manners of men, and that he is almost the only lyric

poet who merits our perusal; for that he sometimes towers into sublimity, that he abounds with sweetness and elegance, and is wonderfully happy in the boldness of his figures and expressions:" and Petronius compliments him as distinguished for an elaborate or elegant felicity.

Petronius may intend such a manner of composition, as to thoughts and language, as appears perfectly spontaneous and unstudied, or the first free effusions of the poet, but yet mingled with such a propriety and elegance as to challenge the admiration and praise of every reader. An eagle-winged genius can with as much ease ascend and soar amidst the heights of heaven, as a minuter mind can lift itself up on its feeble plumes a few inches above the common level of the ground.

Are not the like praises due to Dr. Watts's compositions both in prose and verse? Are there not in his writings such a happiness joined with elegance in his ideas, and such a choice of words and expressions in all respects correspondent to them, as to stamp them with an incomparable value, and so avouch them for his own as to distinguish them from all others? Some specimens of this kind I shall produce; and the rather as they may excite such as would wish to have the reputation of good writers to use their best endeavours to attain it, though, after all their exertions, they may never reach that full measure

in which this excellency was possessed by the Doctor.

"Let God alone be the solid and everlasting rest and refuge of our souls, whose life is eternity, whose kingdom reigns over all, and his dominion is for ever and ever."

"If your life should be lost in such a cause as this," (in attempts for the reformation of manners,) "it will be esteemed martyrdom in the sight of God, and shall be thus written down in the book of the wars of the Lord. Believe me, these red lines will look well in the records of heaven, when the judgment shall be set and the books opened in the face of men and angels."

"A wish or desire" (describing a wise and tender mother, and the dutiful regards of her daughters grown up under her care in return) "has the same power over them now, as a command had in their infancy and childhood; for the command was ever dressed in the softest language of authority, and this made every act of obedience a delight, till it became an habitual pleasure."

"Nothing could displease Phronissa" (so this good mother is called) "more than to hear a jest thrown upon natural infirmities. She thought there was something sacred in misery, and it was not to be touched with a rude hand."

"My soul is touched with such a divine influence that it cannot rest, while God withdraws, as

the needle trembles and hunts after the hidden loadstone."

"Such Christians as these" (such who are weak and too much under the influence of their passions) "live very much by sudden fits and starts of devotion, without that uniform and steady spring of faith and holiness which would render their religion more even and uniform, more honourable to God, and more comfortable to themselves. They are always high on the wing, or else lying moveless on the ground. They are ever in the heights or the depths, travelling on the bright mountains with the songs of heaven on their lips, or groaning and labouring through the dark valleys, and never walking onward as on an even plain towards heaven."

"How easy will it be for our blessed Lord to make a full accomplishment of all his predictions concerning his kingdom! Salvation shall spread through all the tribes and ranks of mankind, as the lightning from heaven in a few moments would communicate a living flame through ten thousand lamps or torches placed in a proper situation and neighbourhood."

"Faith kept in lively exercise can make roses spring out of the midst of thorns, and change the briers of the wilderness into the fruit-trees of paradise."

"What need is there that I should wrap up the shining honours of my Redeemer in the dark and

shadowy language of a religion" (the Jewish) "that is now for ever abolished?"

"Your own meditations can furnish you with many a delightful truth in the midst of so heavy a sorrow; for the covenant of grace has brightness enough in it to gild the most gloomy providence, and to that sweet covenant your soul is no stranger."

"This book is of excellent use to lie on the table in a chamber of sickness, and now and then to take a sip of the river of life, which runs through it in a thousand little rills of peace and joy."

"If my Christianity raises my pious passions in the church or in the closet, may the same Christian spirit be found in all my behaviour! May it regulate my words, and adorn my actions, that God, angels, and men may see the golden thread of religion running through my heart and life in an uniform manner in all times, places, and stations."

"Come, my soul, rouse thyself from thy dull lethargic temper, shake off the dust which hangs heavy on thy better powers. Hast thou not been long weary of such cold and frozen devotion as is practised in this earthly state? Hast thou not long complained of loving thy God so little, and of tasting so little of his love? Come, raise thyself above these dull and despicable scenes of flesh and sense, above all that is not immortal.

Lift up thy head with cheerfulness and eager hope, look out with longing eyes beyond the shadowy region of death, and salute the dawning of the eternal day; stretch out thy arms of intense desire, and send a flight of devout wishes across the dark valley to meet the approaching joys of immortality."

"Such a conversation and such a character made up of piety and virtue were prepared for the attacks of a fever with malignant and mortal symptoms. Slow and unsuspected were the advances of the disease till the powers of reason began to falter and retire, till the heralds of death had made their appearance, and spread on her bosom their purple ensigns."

I might go on, and fill many a page with examples of the Doctor's elaborate or elegant felicity taken from his prose writings, and then collect as great or a greater number of them from his poetry; but I shall restrain myself, especially as the next chapter will be employed in a survey of his poems, where the several citations from them, though introduced for other purposes, may serve as proofs how much he excelled in this prime beauty of composition. Suffice it only to add, that what was said concerning another person may be with the greatest justice applied to the Doctor, "that whatever subject he treated on, and his ready genius turned itself to all, he illuminated it with a lustre peculiar to himself, not unlike the golden

ray of Titian, that, diffusing itself through the whole tablet, avouched it for his own."

His sermons, if I am right in my opinion, are the standards of useful preaching, such as is calculated to inform the minds, convince the consciences, impress the memories, and reach and command the hearts of mankind in those matters of infinite moment, the glory of God, and their own everlasting salvation.

To show that his sermons deserve these praises, let it be observed, that there is nothing like a parade or ostentation of learning in them; that there are no terms of grammar or logic unintelligible to a common reader; and that the language in which they are composed is rather the language of conversation than that of set compositions, though by no means beneath the dignity due to the pulpit and the press. His discourses are not made up of divisions broken into divisions till they appear little better than the numerous naked arms, boughs, and sprigs of a tree in the barrenness of the winter. His heads and particulars are comparatively but few, and they are enriched with much enlargement. Beautiful is their foliage, and plenteous and pleasant are their fruits.

The "branching sermon, as" the Doctor styles it, is what he ever avoided in his example, as he very properly reprehends it in his writings. "It is a vain affectation," says he, "to draw out a long

rank of particulars in the same sermon under one general, and run up the number to eighteenthly, or seven-and-twentiethly. Men who take delight in this sort of work will cut out all their sense into shreds, and every thing they can say of any thing will be a new particular.

"This sort of folly and mistaken conduct appears weekly in Polyramus's lectures, and renders all his discourses lean and insipid. Whether it proceed from a mere barrenness of thought, and a native dryness of soul, that he is not able to vary his matter, and amplify beyond the formal topics of an analysis, or whether it arise from an affectation of such a way of talking, it is hard to say; but it is certain that the chief part of the auditory are not over-much profited or pleased. When I sit under his preaching I fancy myself brought into the valley of Ezekiel's vision. 'It was full of bones; and, behold, there were very many in the valley; and, lo, they were very dry.' Ezek. xxxvii. 1, 2. It is the variety of enlargement upon a few proper heads that clothes the dry bones with flesh, and animates them with blood and spirits: it is this that colours the discourse, makes it warm and strong, and renders the divine propositions bright and persuasive: it is this brings down the doctrine or the duty to the understanding and conscience of the whole auditory, and commands the natural affections into the interest of the Gospel; in short it is this

which, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, gives life and force, beauty and success, to a sermon, and provides food for souls. A single rose-bush, or a dwarf-pear, with all their leaves, flowers, and fruit about them, have more beauty and spirit in themselves, and yield more food and pleasure to mankind, than the innumerable branches, boughs, and twigs of a long hedge of thorns. The fruit will feed the hungry, and the flower will refresh the fainting, which is more than can be said of the thickest oak in Bashan, when it has lost its vital juice. It may spread its limbs, indeed, far and wide; but they are naked, withered, and sapless."

As the Doctor in his sermons never ran into a barren superfluity of particulars, so, on the other hand, he cautiously shunned, and as much, I might say more, disliked, the other extreme, that of an harangue without any division of the subject. I will repeat in part what he has with just reason objected against this method of preaching, and of which I may be bold to say there is not a single instance in the vast multitude of his discourses. "Is it not possible," says he, "to forsake one extreme without falling into a worse? Is there no medium between a sermon made up of sixty dry particulars, and a long loose declamation without any distinction of the parts of it? Must the Preacher divide his works by the breaks of a minute watch, or let it run on incessantly

like the flowing stream of the hour-glass, which measures his divinity? Surely Fluvio preaches as though he knew no medium, and, having taken a disgust heretofore at one of Polyramus's lectures, he resolved his discourses should have no distinction of particulars in them. His language flows smoothly in a long connexion of periods. The attention is detained in a gentle pleasure, and, to say the best thing possible of it, the hearer is soothed into something like divine delight; but he can give the inquiring friend scarce any account what it was that pleased him. He retains a faint idea of the sweetness, but has forgot the sense. Tell me, Fluvio, is this the most effectual way to instruct ignorant creatures in the several articles of faith, and the various duties of the Christian life? Will such an uniform flow of language imprint all the distinct parts of Christian knowledge on the mind in their best form and order? Do you find such a gentle and gliding stream of words most powerful to call up the souls of sinners from their dangerous and fatal lethargy? Will this indolent and moveless species of oratory make a thoughtless wretch attend to matters of infinite moment? Can a long purling sound awaken a sleepy conscience, and give a perishing sinner just notions of his dreadful hazard? Can it furnish his understanding and memory with all the awful and tremendous topics of our religion, when it scarce leaves any distinct

impression of one of them in his soul? Can you make the arrow wound where it will not stick? Where all the discourse vanishes from the remembrance, can you suppose the soul to be profited or enriched? When you brush over the closed eye-lids with a feather, did you ever find it give light to the blind? Have any of your soft harangues, your continued threads of silken eloquence, ever raised the dead? I fear your whole aim is to talk over the appointed number of minutes upon the subject, or to practise a little upon the gentler passions, without any concern how to give the understanding its due improvement, or furnish the memory with any lasting pleasure, or to make a knowing and religious Christian.—Preachers talk reason and religion to their auditories in vain if they do not make the argument so short as to come within their grasp, and give a frequent rest to their thoughts. They must break the bread of life into pieces to feed children with it, and part their discourse into distinct propositions to give the ignorant a plain scheme of any one doctrine, and enable them to comprehend or retain it. Polyramus's auditors have some confusion in their knowledge, but Fluvio's hearers have scarce any knowledge at all."

It may be added concerning the Doctor's sermons, that in proper places they are both cool and argumentative, and, again, earnest and pathetic. They are calculated to enlighten the understand-

ing, convince and fix the judgment, and at the same time penetrate the heart, and diffuse a divine fervour through the soul. They are also scriptural, eminently so; not to the exclusion of arguments that may be visible from the light of nature, or grow up from the dictates of conscience, but so as to pay a just honour to the oracles of God, the rule of our faith, the spring of our joys, and our guide to the celestial glory. In a word, the Doctor, considered as a Minister, admirably answers to the character he has drawn of an able Divine, and I am persuaded that it may be with the fullest truth and justice applied to himself. In this view I transcribe it from his excellent pages. "Ergates," says he, "is a workman that need not be ashamed. He preaches like a man who watches for our souls, as one who must give an account. He never affects to choose a very obscure text, lest he should waste too much of the hour in explaining the literal sense of it. He reserves all those obscurities till they come in course at his seasons of public exposition; for it is his opinion that preaching the Gospel for the salvation of men carries in it a little different idea from a learned and critical exposition of the difficult texts of Scripture. He knows well how to use his logic in his composures; but he calls no part of the words by their logical names, if there be any vulgar names which answer them. Reading and meditation have furnished him with ex-

tensive views of his subject, and his own good sense hath taught him to give sufficient reasons for every thing he asserts; but he never uses one of them till a proof be needful. He is acquainted with the mistaken glosses of expositors; but he thinks it needless to acquaint his hearers with them, unless there be evident danger they might run into the same mistake. He understands well what his subject is not, as well as what it is; but, when he would explain it to you, he never says, first, negatively, unless some remarkable error is at hand, and which his hearers may easily fall into for want of such a caution. Thus in five or ten minutes, at the most, he makes his way plain to the proposition or theme on which he designs to discourse; and, being so wise as to know well what to say and what to leave out, he proportions every part of his work to his time: he enlarges upon the subject by way of illustration, till the truth becomes evident and intelligent to the weakest of his hearers; then he confirms the point with a few convincing arguments, where the matter requires it, and makes haste to turn the doctrine into use and improvement. Thus the ignorant are instructed, and the growing Christians are established and improved. The stupid sinner is loudly awakened, and the mourning soul receives consolation. The unbeliever is led to trust in Christ and his Gospel; and the impenitent and immoral are convinced and softened,

are melted and reformed. The inward voice of the Holy Spirit joins with the voice of the Minister; the good man and the hypocrite have their proper portions assigned them, and the work of the Lord prospers in his hand. This is the usual course and manner of his ministry. This method being natural and easy, he casts many of his discourses into this form; but he is no slave to forms and methods of any kind. He makes the nature of his subject and the necessity of his hearers the great rule to direct him what method he shall choose in every sermon, that he may better enlighten, convince, and persuade. Ergates well knows that where the subject itself is entirely practical, he has no need of the formality of long uses and exhortations. He knows that practice is the chief design of doctrine; therefore he bestows most of his labour on this part of his office, and intermingles much of the pathetic under every particular; yet he wisely observes the special dangers of his flock, and the errors of the time he lives in, and now and then, though very seldom, he thinks it necessary to spend almost a whole discourse in mere doctrinal articles. Upon such an occasion he thinks it proper to take up a little larger part of his hour in explaining and confirming the sense of his text, and brings it down to the understanding of a child. At another time, perhaps, he particularly designs to entertain the few learned and polite among his

auditors, and that with this view,—that he may ingratiate his discourses with their ears, and may so far gratify their curiosity in this part of his sermon as to give an easier entrance for the more plain, necessary, and important parts of it into their hearts. Then he aims at and reaches the sublime, and furnishes an entertainment for the finest taste; but he scarce ever finishes his sermon without compassion to the unlearned, and an address which may reach their consciences with the words of salvation. I have observed him sometimes after a learned discourse come down from the pulpit as a man ashamed, and quite out of countenance. He has blushed and complained to his intimate friends, lest he should be thought to have preached himself, and not Christ Jesus the Lord. He has been ready to wish he had entertained the audience in a more unlearned manner, and on a more vulgar subject, lest the servants, and the labourers, and the tradesmen there should reap no advantage to their souls, and the important hour of worship be lost, as to their improvement. Well he knows, and keeps it upon his heart, that the middle and lower ranks of mankind, and people of an unlettered character, make up the greater part of the assembly; therefore he is ever seeking how to adapt his thoughts, and his language, and far the greatest part of all his ministrations, to the instruction and profit of persons of common rank and capacity. It is in

the midst of these he hopes to find his triumph, his joy, and crown in the last great day; for not many wise, not many noble, are called. There are so much spirit and beauty in his conversation, that it is sought and desired by the ingenious men of his age; but he carries a severe guard of piety always about him, which tempers the pleasant air of his discourse, even in the brightest and freest hours; and before he leaves the place, if possible, he will leave something of the savour of heaven there. In the parlour he carries on the design of the pulpit, but in so elegant a manner that it charms the company, and gives not the least occasion for censure. His polite acquaintance will sometimes rally him for talking so plainly in his sermons, and sinking his good sense to so low a level. But Ergates is bold to tell the gayest of them, 'Our public business, my friend, is chiefly with the weak and ignorant; that is, the bulk of mankind. The poor receive the Gospel. The mechanics and day-labourers, the women and children, of my assembly have souls to be saved. I will imitate my blessed Redeemer in preaching the Gospel to the poor; and learn of St. Paul to become all things to all men, that I may win souls, and lead many sinners to heaven by repentance, faith, and holiness.'"

I shall conclude the chapter with some verses, if they deserve the name, from an elegiac poem of mine to the memory of the Doctor, published

soon after his decease, in which I have endeavoured a description of him as a Minister.

"WHILE deep attention holds the listening throng,
And piety and wisdom grace his mien,
And mould his every accent, he fulfils
His holy, high commission. Hark! he sounds
The trump of Sinai, and describes the curse
Flamed, wing'd, and level'd at the sinner's head;
Warns, urges, begs him to escape the blow.
Now Calvary's different scenes he sets in view,
Unfolds the wonders of the cross, proclaims
How Jesus spreads his willing arms to' embrace
The guilty soul, and sheds his vital blood
To quench the fiery vengeance of the law,
And full forgiveness with the skies procure.
Now eloquence, like the fair vernal sun,
Which melts the bands of winter's freezing reign,
And o'er the world its smiling radiance throws,
In lovely charms displays celestial truth,
And stamps the Maker's image on the heart.
Anon each vice in its detested forms
Of horror glares malevolent and wild,
The monstrous birth of hell, itself the food
Of its own vipers, and by doom divine
Condemn'd to the dire regions whence it rose.

These were the themes that dwelt on Watts's tongue
When he address'd the crowd, and this his zeal!
No trivial subject e'er debased his strain;
No pomp of language smother'd half his sense;
No learned disquisitions starved the mind;
No sharp invectives waked the soul to rage;
But all was weighty, amiable, sublime,
Solemn, devout, as angels once were heard,
When they, descending from their thrones above,
Reveal'd to men the counsels of the skies."

CHAPTER VII.

THE Doctor's poetical writings are numerous, and all of them have considerable merit. They comprise a large collection of lyric poems, his book of "Hymns," his "Imitation of the Psalms," his "Songs for Children," and several pieces of poetry in his "Miscellaneous Thoughts."

In his "*Horæ Lyricæ*" he gives a full license to his Muse, and she soars without any kind of check or control, very frequently in Pindaric and once in Sapphic measures; nor is she laid under the necessity of selecting such words as are level to the lowest capacities, as is the case as to his "Hymns," "Psalms," and "Songs for Children," that his end in writing them might not be defeated.

"In some of the more elevated Psalms," says the Doctor, "I have given a little indulgence to my genius; and if it should appear that I have aimed at the sublime, yet I have generally kept within the reach of an unlearned reader. I never thought the art of sublime writing consisted in flying out of sight; nor am I of the mind of the Italian who said, 'Obscurity begets greatness.' I have always avoided the language of the poets, where it did not suit the language of the Gospel. In many of these composures I have just permitted my verse to rise above a flat and indolent style, yet I hope it is every where supported above

the just contempt of the critics; though I am sensible I have often subdued it below their esteem, because I would neither indulge any bold metaphors, nor admit of hard words, nor tempt an ignorant worshipper to sing without understanding."—Preface to his "Imitation of the Psalms."

In his preface to his "Hymns" the Doctor speaks in the like manner. "The whole book is written," says he, "in four sorts of metre, and fitted to the most common tunes. I have seldom permitted a stop in the middle of a line, and seldom left the end of a line without one. The metaphors are generally sunk to the level of vulgar capacities. I have aimed at ease of numbers and smoothness of sound, and endeavoured to make the sense plain and obvious. If the verse appears so gentle and flowing as to incur the censure of feebleness, I may honestly affirm that sometimes it cost me labour to make it so; some of the beauties of poesy are neglected, and some wilfully defaced. I have thrown out the lines that were too sonorous, and have given an allay to my verse, lest a more exalted turn of thought or language should darken or disturb the devotion."

As to the Doctor's "Songs for Children," they are drawn up in admirable condescension to their feeble capacities, and yet a rich vein of genius runs through them. Perhaps an equal instance cannot be found in any English writings, or any others, where the easiest and plainest language is accom-

panied with some of the finest strokes and brightest colours of poetry.

I shall only select one instance, that of the comparison of the sun and a Christian, in the poem styled, "A Summer Evening," a poem so fine, that I once asked the Doctor why he had not inserted it in his "*Horæ Lyricæ;*" to which he answered, that it was not written when he published that collection of sacred verse.

How fine has the day been! How bright was the sun!
How lovely and joyful the course that he run,
Though he rose in a mist, when his race he begun,
And there follow'd some droppings of rain!
But now the fair traveller 's come to the west,
His rays are all gold, and his beauties are best;
He paints the skies gay as he sinks to his rest,
And foretels a bright rising again.

Just such is the Christian. His course he begins,
Like the sun in a mist, while he mourns for his sins,
And melts into tears: then he breaks out and shines,
And travels his heavenly way.
But when he comes nearer to finish his race,
Like a fine setting sun, he looks richer in grace,
And gives a sure hope at the end of his days
Of rising in brighter array.

Such are the performances of this great man. How wide their diffusion has been through the Christian world, and in what esteem and honour they have been and are still held, their numerous editions, and the large and successive demands for them, abundantly prove; and they will un-

doubtedly remain the unperishable monuments of his genius and piety.

Many of the Lyric Poems were written in 1694, when the Doctor was only twenty years old; and some of them bear even a prior date. In a course of time they increased, till they amounted to a considerable number, which were printed in 1706, when he was at the age of thirty-two. This collection falls short by about seventy poems inserted in the second and subsequent editions of his "*Horæ Lyricæ*," but it contains several pieces which are not be found there.

In the first edition of the Lyric Poems, there is an epistle to the Doctor's sisters, S. and M. W., that is, to Sarah and Mary Watts, which, partly in prose, partly in verse, runs thus:—

"DEAR SISTERS,

"READ the love of my heart in the first line of my letter, and believe it. I am much concerned to hear of my mother's continued weakness. We take our share of these painful disorders of nature which afflict her whom we honour and love. I know, also, that your hurries of business must be more than doubled thereby; but we are daily leaving care and sin behind us. The past temptations shall vex us no more. The months which are gone return not, and the sorrows which we hourly feel lessen the decreed number. Every pulse beats a moment of pain

away, and thus by degrees we arrive nearer to the sweet period of life and trouble.

Bear up, my dear ones, through the ruffling storms
Of a vain vexing world; tread down the cares,
Those ragged thorns which lie across the road,
Nor spend a tear upon them. Trust me, sisters,
The dew of eyes will make the briers grow;
Nor let the distant phantom of delight
Too long allure your gaze, or swell your hope
To dangerous size. If it approach your feet,
And court your hand, forbid the' intruding joy
To sit too near your heart. Still may our souls
Claim kindred with the skies, nor mix with dust
Our better-born affections, leave the globe
A nest for worms, and hasten to our home.

O there are gardens of the' immortal kind,
Which crown the heavenly Eden's rising hills
With beauty and with sweets. No lurking mischief
Dwells in the fruit, nor serpent twines the boughs;
The branches bend laden with life and bliss
Ripe for the taste, but 'tis a steep ascent;
Hold fast the golden chain * let down from heaven;
'Twill help your feet and wings. I feel its force
Draw upward: fasten'd to the pearly gate,
It guides the way unerring. Happy clue
Through this dark wild! 'Twas wisdom's noblest work,
All join'd by power divine, and every link is love.

"Sisters, accept the sudden rapture kindly. The Muse is not awake every day. If she has a moment's release from the lethargy, see it is devoted to serve and please you.

"*June* 15*th*, 1704."

* The Gospel.

I have inserted this epistle, that it may be a witness both to the Doctor's filial duty and fraternal affection, and that I might take the opportunity of showing how much he enlarged these verses in the subsequent edition of his "Lyric Poems," when, not improbably after the death of his sister Mary, he addressed the same epistle to his sister Sarah only, under the name of Sarissa; for I take her to be the person intended.

BEAR up, Sarissa, through the ruffling storms
Of a vain vexing world; tread down the cares,
Those ragged thorns which lie across the road,
Nor spend a tear upon them. Trust the Muse,
She sings experienced truth, this briny dew,
This rain of eyes, will make the briers grow.
We travel through a desert, and our feet
Have measured a fair space, and left behind
A thousand dangers, and a thousand snares
Well 'scaped. Adieu, ye horrors of the dark,
Ye finish'd labours, and ye tedious toils
Of days and hours: the twinge of real smart,
And the false terrors of ill-boding dreams,
Vanish together, be alike forgot,
For ever blended in one common grave.

Farewell, ye waxing and ye waning moons,
Which we have watch'd behind the flying clouds
On night's dark hill, or setting, or ascending,
Or in meridian height. Then silence reign'd
O'er half the world; then ye beheld our tears,
Ye witness'd our complaints, our kindred groans,
Sad harmony, while with your beamy horns
Or richer orb ye silver'd o'er the green
Where trod our feet, and lent a feeble light

To mourners. Now ye have fulfill'd your rounds,
Those hours are fled, farewell! Months that are gone
Are gone for ever, and have borne away
Each his own load. Our woes and sorrows past,
Mountainous woes, still lessen as they fly
Far off. So billows in a stormy sea,
Wave after wave, a long succession, roll
Beyond the ken of sight. The sailors safe
Look far astern till they have lost the storm,
And shout their boisterous joys. A gentler Muse
Sings thy dear safety, and commands thy cares
To dark oblivion; buried deep in night
Lose them, Sarissa, and assist my song.

Awake thy voice; sing how the slender line
Of fate's immortal NOW divides the PAST,
From all the future, with eternal bars
Forbidding a return. The past temptations
No more shall vex us. Every grief we feel
Shortens the destined number. Every pulse
Beats a sharp moment of the pain away,
And the last stroke will come. By swift degrees
Time sweeps us off, and we shall soon arrive
At life's sweet period. O celestial point,
Which ends this mortal story!

But if a glimpse of light with flattering ray
Break through the clouds of life, or wandering fire
Amidst the shades invite your doubtful feet,
Beware the dancing meteor. Faithless guide,
Which leads the lonely pilgrim wide astray
To bogs, and fens, and pits, and certain death.
Should vicious pleasure take an angel-form,
And at a distance rise by slow degrees
Treacherous to wind herself into your heart,
Stand firm aloof, nor let the gaudy phantom
Too long allure your gaze. The just delight,

That Heaven indulges lawful, must obey
Superior powers, nor tempt your thoughts too far
In slavery to sense, nor swell your hope
To dangerous size. If it approach your feet,
And court your hand, forbid the' intruding joy
To sit too near your heart. Still may our souls
Claim kindred with the skies, nor mix with dust
Their better-born affections, leave the globe
A nest for worms, and hasten to our home.

O there are gardens of the' immortal kind,
Which crown the heavenly Eden's rising hills
With beauty and with sweets: no lurking mischief
Dwells in the fruit, nor serpent twines the boughs;
The branches bend laden with life and bliss
Ripe for the taste, but 'tis a steep ascent.
Hold fast the golden chain * let down from heaven;
'T will help your feet and wings. I feel its force
Draw upwards: fasten'd to the pearly gate,
It guides the way unerring. Happy clue
Through this dark wild! 'Twas wisdom's noblest work,
All join'd by power divine, and every link is love.

It has been observed, that the Doctor spent two years, after he had finished his academical studies, at his father's at Southampton, in reading, meditation, and prayer, that is, the years 1695 and 1696, the twenty-first and twenty-second years of his age. During this period he composed his Hymns, at least a great part of them. Mr. John Morgan, a Minister of very respectable character, of Romsey, Hants, gives the following information:—"The occasion of the Doctor's Hymns was this, as I had the account

* The Gospel.

from his worthy fellow-labourer and colleague, the Rev. Mr. Price, in whose family I dwelt. The hymns which were sung at the Dissenting meeting at Southampton were so little to the gust of Mr. Watts that he could not forbear complaining of them to his father. The father bade him try what he could do to mend the matter. He did, and had such success in his first essay, that a second hymn was earnestly desired of him, and then a third, and fourth, &c.; till in process of time there was such a number of them as to make up a volume." Let the reader reflect a moment what a spirit of devotion, and what a genius, the Doctor discovered at such an early season of life, at the most but twenty-two years of age, as to compose at once such pious and beautiful hymns on such a variety of subjects; and let him thence judge how well this excellent man filled up his time at his father's, and how much noble improvement was contained in the dedication of two years to the purposes of reading, meditation, and prayer.

These hymns were not published till the year 1707, as the Doctor thought it best to send his Lyric Poems first into the world; considering with himself, it is not improbable, that if these were accepted with mankind, they would prepare the way for his hymns; but that, if the brighter productions of his Muse did not meet with success, it might be prudent in him to with-

hold from the public a work in which he had purposely reduced his poetry to a lower strain.

The Lyric Poems were first printed in 1706, and the encouragement given to them (for a second edition appeared in 1709) no doubt determined the Doctor to venture his "Hymns" into the world, and, accordingly they were published in the next year, 1707. This edition, including the several doxologies, and reckoning each one of them as a hymn, contains two hundred and twenty hymns; and has an essay annexed to it towards the improvement of psalmody, or an inquiry how the psalms of David ought to be translated into Christian songs; and how lawful and necessary it is to compose other hymns, according to the clearer revelations of the Gospel, for the use of the Christian church. A second edition followed in 1709, which is said in the title-page to be corrected and much enlarged; and so indeed it is, some of the hymns in the first edition having been considerably altered, and an accession of new hymns having been made to it; but the Doctor himself has given an account of the matter in what he styles "Advertisements concerning the second edition," which run thus:—

"1. There are almost one hundred and fifty new hymns added, and one or more suited to every theme and subject in divinity. Having found by converse with Christians what words or

lines in the former made them less useful, I have not only made various corrections in them, but have endeavoured to avoid the same mistakes in all the new composures. And whereas many of the former were too particularly adapted to special frames and seasons of the Christian life, almost all which are added have a more general and extensive sense, and may be assumed and sung by most persons in a worshipping congregation.

"2. About fourteen or fifteen psalms which were translated in the first edition are left out in this, because I intend, if God afford life and assistance, to convert the biggest part of the book of Psalms into spiritual songs for the use of Christians; yet the same numbers are applied to the hymns, that there may be no confusion between the first and second editions."

In a note of March 3 1719-20, the Doctor adds, "Since the sixth edition of this book" (the Hymns) "the author has finished what he had so long promised, namely, the Psalms of David, imitated in the language of the New Testament, which the world seems to have received with approbation by the sale of some thousands in a year's time.* There the reader will find those psalms which were left out of all the later editions of these Hymns in their proper places. It is presumed that book, in conjunction with this, may appear to be such a provision for psalmody

* His Psalms were first printed in 1719.

as to answer most occasions of the Christian's life; and, if an author's own opinion may be taken, he esteems it the greatest work that ever he has published, or ever hopes to do, for the use of the churches."

As to the usefulness of the Doctor's Psalms and Hymns, or how conducive they all are to the promotion of piety and virtue, this is seen and confessed by all; and I am very certain I should express the sentiments of thousands and ten thousands, were he still living, if I should address to him the verses of Mr. Prior to Dr. Sherlock, on his Discourse on Death; referring to his Lyric Poems, Psalms, Hymns, and Songs for Children.

"Thee youth shall study, and no more engage
Their flattering wishes for uncertain age;
No more with fruitless care, and cheated strife,
Chase fleeting pleasure through this maze of life,
Finding the wretched all they here can have
But present food, and but a future grave;
Each great as Philip's victor-son shall view
This abject world, and weeping ask a new.

"Decrepit age shall read thee, and confess
Thy labours can assuage where medicines cease;
Shall bless thy words, their wounded souls' relief,
The drops that sweeten the last dregs of life;
Shall look to heaven, and laugh at all beneath,
Own riches gather'd trouble, fame a breath,
And life an ill, whose only cure is death.

"Thy even thoughts with so much plainness flow,
Their sense untutor'd infancy may know;

Yet to such height is all that plainness wrought,
Wit may admire, and letter'd pride be taught:
Easy in words thy style, in sense sublime,
On its blest steps each age and sex may rise,
'Tis like the ladder in the Patriarch's dream,
Its foot on earth, its height above the skies;
Diffused its virtue, boundless is its power,
'Tis public health, and universal cure,
Of heav'nly manna 'tis a second feast,
A nation's food, and all to every taste."

The piety and talent displayed by Dr. Watts in his various writings, and the holy and benevolent objects to which they were directed, could not fail to procure for him a large share of public respect, and especially from the wise and good. Many testimonies to his worth might be selected from contemporary writers; but two must at present suffice.

Prefixed to the German translation of his Discourses on Death and Heaven, published at Halle in Saxony, 1727, is the following preface:—

"Here is communicated to you a treatise in which the late pious Mr. Franck, Professor of Divinity at Halle, found so much edification and satisfaction, that he engaged an able person to translate it into our German tongue, to make others partake of the same spiritual benefit. This treatise consists of two funeral sermons which an English Divine, who perhaps is still living, composed on the death of two eminent persons, which he enlarged for their publication. The subject

of the first is 'death,' taken from 1 Cor. xv. 26. The second is 'heaven,' from Heb. xii. 23. From this last he takes an occasion of flying with his thoughts into the blessed mansions of the just made perfect, by giving us not only a very probable and beautiful idea of the glory of a future life in general, but also an enumeration of the many sorts of enjoyments and pleasures which are to be met with there.

"Though the first sermon contains many elegant passages worthy to be read, yet the latter seems to be a more elaborate piece, because it sets the doctrine of eternal life in a greater light, and enriches it with many probable inferences from the word of God. He proposes his excellent thoughts in most emphatical terms, in that beautiful order and with such a vivacity of style that he keeps the reader in a continual attention, and an eager desire to read on. It is plain the author's mind was so taken up with the beauty of heaven that his mouth could not but speak the abundance of his heart. There is a secret unction in his expressions which leaves a sweet savour in the reader's heart, and raises in him a desire after the blessed society he describes; and though the reader should not entirely agree with the author's notions, yet he will not peruse this treatise without a particular edification and blessing. I cannot deny but the author's conjectures may be sometimes carried a little too far; but that doth

not prejudice the subject in the least. Besides, he is generally so happy as to find some arguments for his probable notions in the word of God, and to answer very dexterously all the objections which can be made against him.

"May the ever-living God give a blessing to this work, and grant that those sweet and relishing truths proposed in these leaves may make such an impression on the minds of the readers as those noble truths deserve! May he prevent all abuse of this delightful subject, and never permit it to be turned into a mere dry or fruitless speculation; but may he inflame every reader with an holy desire after a blessed eternity, and rouse and excite all those who have not yet begun the paths of salvation to enter into them without delay, that they may not rest in a mere delightful prospect of the land of Canaan, nor be for ever excluded by their unbelief from the eternal enjoyment of it! Given at Halle, July 10, 1727.

"JOHN JACOB RAMBACH,
"S. Theol. Prof. Ordinar."

The following is the dedication by Dr. Philip Doddridge of his very valuable treatise entitled, "The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul."

"*To the Rev. Dr. Isaac Watts.*

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,

"WITH the most affectionate gratitude and respect I beg leave to present to you a book,

which owes its existence to your request, its copiousness to your plan, and much of its perspicuity to your review, and to the use I made of your remarks on that part of it which your health and leisure would permit you to examine. I address it to you, not to beg your patronage to it, for of that I am already well assured, and much less from any ambition of attempting your character, for which, if I were more equal to the subject, I should think this a very improper place, but chiefly from a secret delight which I find in the thought of being known to those whom this may reach as one whom you have honoured not only with your friendship, but with so much of your esteem and approbation too as must substantially appear in your committing a work to me, which you had yourself projected as one of the most considerable services of your life.

"I have long thought the love of popular applause a meanness, which a philosophy far inferior to that of our divine Master might have taught us to conquer. But to be esteemed by eminently great and good men to whom we are intimately known, appears to me not only one of the most solid attestations of some real worth, but, next to the approbation of God and our own consciences, one of its most valuable rewards. It will, I doubt not, be found so in that world to which spirits like yours are tending, and for which, through divine grace, you have obtained so uncommon a

degree of ripeness. And permit me, Sir, while I write this, to refresh myself with the hope that when that union of hearts, which has so long subsisted between us, shall arrive to its full maturity and endearment there, it will be matter of mutual delight to recollect that you have assigned me, and that I have in some degree executed, a task which may, perhaps, under the blessing of God, awaken and improve religious sentiments in the minds of those we leave behind us, and of others that may arise after us, in this vain, transitory, and ensnaring world.

"Such is the improvement you have made of your capacities for service, that I am fully persuaded heaven has received very few in these latter ages, who have done so much to serve its interests here below; few who have laboured in this best of causes with equal zeal and success; and therefore I cannot but join with all who wish well to the Christian interest amongst us, in acknowledging the goodness of Providence to you, and to the church of Christ, in prolonging a life at once so valuable and so tender to such an advanced period. With them, Sir, I rejoice that God hath given you to possess in so extraordinary a degree not only the consciousness of intending great benefit to the world, but the satisfaction of having effected it, and seeing such an harvest already springing up, I hope, as an earnest of a more copious increase from thence. With mul-

titudes more I bless God that you are not, in the evening of so afflicted and so laborious a day, rendered entirely incapable of serving the public from the press, and from the pulpit; and that amidst the pain which your active spirit feels when these pleasing services suffer long interruption from bodily weakness, it may be so singularly refreshed by reflecting on that sphere of extensive usefulness in which by your writings you continually move.

"I congratulate you, dear Sir, that while you are in a multitude of families and schools of the lower class condescending to the humble yet important work of forming infant-minds to the first rudiments of religious knowledge and devout impressions by your various Catechisms and Divine Songs, you are also daily reading lectures of Logic and other useful branches of philosophy to studious youth; and this not only in private academies, but in the most public and celebrated seats of learning, not merely in Scotland, and in our American colonies, where for some peculiar considerations it might be most naturally expected, but, through the amiable candour of some excellent men and accomplished tutors, in our English Universities too. I congratulate you, that you are teaching, no doubt, hundreds of Ministers and private Christians by your sermons, and other theological tracts, so happily calculated to diffuse through their minds that light of knowledge, and

through their hearts that fervour of piety, which God has been pleased to enkindle in your own. But above all I congratulate you, that by your sacred poetry, especially by your psalms and your hymns, you are leading the worship, and I trust also, animating the devotion, of myriads in our public assemblies every Sabbath, and in their families and closets every day. This, Sir, at least so far as it relates to the service of the sanctuary, is an unparalleled favour by which God hath been pleased to distinguish you, I may boldly say it, beyond any of his servants now upon earth. Well may it be esteemed a glorious equivalent, and indeed much more than an equivalent, for all those views of ecclesiastical preferment to which such talents, learning, virtues, and interest, might have entitled you in an Establishment; and I doubt not but you joyfully accept it as such.

"Nor is it easy to conceive in what circumstances you could on any supposition have been easier and happier than in that pious and truly honourable family in which, as I verily believe in special indulgence both to you and to it, Providence has been pleased to appoint that you should spend so considerable a part of your life. It is my earnest prayer that all the remainder of it may be serene, useful, and pleasant. And as, to my certain knowledge, your compositions have been the singular comfort of many excellent Christians, some of them numbered among my dearest friends, on

their dying beds, for I have heard stanzas of them repeated from the lips of several, who were doubtless in a few hours to begin the song of Moses and the Lamb; so I hope and trust that, when God shall call you to that salvation for which your faith and patience have so long been waiting, he will shed around you the choicest beams of his favour, and gladden your heart with consolations like those which you have been the happy instrument of administering to others.

"In the meantime, Sir, be assured that I am not a little animated in the various labours to which Providence has called me by reflecting that I have such a contemporary, and especially such a friend, whose single presence would be to me as that of a cloud of witnesses here below to awaken my alacrity in the race which is set before me. And I am persuaded that, while I say this, I speak the sentiment of many of my brethren, even of various denominations; a consideration which I hope will do something towards reconciling a heart so generous as yours to a delay of that exceeding and eternal weight of glory which is now so nearly approaching. Yes, my honoured friend, you will, I hope, cheerfully endure a little longer continuance in life amidst all its infirmities, from an assurance that, while God is pleased to maintain the exercise of your reason, it is hardly possible you should live in vain to the world or yourself. Every day and every trial is brightening

your crown, and rendering you still more and more meet for an inheritance among the saints in light. Every word which you drop from the pulpit has now surely its peculiar weight. The eyes of many are on their ascending prophet, eagerly intent that they may catch, if not his mantle, at least some divine sentence from his lips, which may long guide their ways, and warm their hearts. This solicitude your friends bring into those happy moments in which they are favoured with your converse in private; and, when you are retired from them, your prayers, I doubt not, largely contribute towards guarding your country, watering the church, and blessing the world. Long may they continue to answer these great ends! And permit me, Sir, to conclude with expressing my cheerful confidence that in these best moments you are often particularly mindful of one who so highly esteems, so greatly needs, and so warmly returns that remembrance as, Reverend Sir,

" Your most affectionate brother,
and obliged humble servant,

" NORTHAMPTON, " PHILIP DODDRIDGE."
" *Dec.* 13, 1744."

In the year 1728 the Universities both of Edinburgh and Aberdeen, in a most respectful manner, without his knowledge, conferred the degree of Doctor of Divinity upon Dr. Watts, a mark of dis-

tinction to which he was justly entitled. Nor can I omit that act of honour which the late Speaker of the House of Commons, the Right Honourable Arthur Onslow, Esq., paid this venerable man. Not long before the Doctor's death, taking with him Dr. Jabez Earle, and Dr. Joseph Stennett, two eminent Dissenting Ministers, in his coach, he made a visit to the Doctor at Stoke-Newington, for the purpose of gratifying himself with the sight of so great and good a man, whom he held in the highest esteem. The Speaker declared to me, that when he saw him, he thought he saw a man of God; and in the last visit but one I made Mr. Onslow, (for I had the honour of an intimacy with him,) he mentioned the affair afresh, and devoutly cried out, "My soul where his soul now is!"*

* It is pleasing to trace the influence of religion upon persons who occupy the more elevated stations in society. The following anecdote, which is given in the Journal of John Nelson, is a beautiful illustration of the sentiments with which the eminent man here mentioned is said to have contemplated the character of Dr. Watts. About the period here referred to, Mr. Nelson was employed as a mason at the house of Lord Onslow, near Guildford, in Surrey. "One day," he says, "the Speaker of the House of Commons came to visit my Lord: and taking a view of the work, he asked me many questions about it, which I answered as well as I could. He said, 'This is a fine house, and a fine estate of land about it! But what will it signify? For a piece of land six feet long and three broad will fit me shortly.' He then fetched a deep sigh, went away, and walked alone among the trees."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE Doctor in his sermon on the "Privilege of the Living above the Dead" observes, "that a calm and cheerful readiness for a removal out of this world, is an honour done to Christ and his Gospel here on earth, which belongs not to the heavenly state. Death in the course of nature," says he, "as well as by the hands of violence, hath always something awful and formidable in it. Flesh and blood shrink and tremble at the appearance of a dissolution, and Christ delights to see the grace he has wrought in the saints gain the ascendancy over flesh and blood, and conquer the terrors of death and the grave. He loves to see his faithful followers maintain a serene soul, and venture into the invisible world, upon the merit of his blood, with holy fortitude, and a cheerful faith. It is only the lively Christian that can die, and glorify God his Saviour in that great and important hour. The saints who are arrived at heaven dwell in the temple of God, and shall go no more out. They are for ever possessed of life and immortality. There are no more deaths and dangers to encounter, no more terrors to engage their conflict. Death is the last enemy of all the saints; and, when the Christian meets it with sacred courage, he gives that honour to the Captain of his salvation, which the saints in glory can never give, and

which he himself can never repeat. Dying with faith and fortitude is a noble conclusion of a life of zeal and service. It is the very last duty on earth. When that is done, then heaven begins." To the same purpose he speaks in another discourse.

" It is a glory," says he, " to the Gospel when we can lie down with courage, in hope of its promised blessings. It is an honour to our common faith, when it overcomes the terrors of death, and raises the Christian to a song of triumph in the view of the last enemy. It is a new crown put upon the head of our Redeemer, and a living cordial put into the hands of mourning friends in our dying hour, when we can take our leave of them with holy fortitude rejoicing in the salvation of Christ. No sooner does he call but we are ready, and can answer with holy transport, 'Lord, I come.' "

What the Doctor so justly and properly describes, he himself exemplified in his last hours. As his day of life was eminently bright and useful, so its setting was remarkably serene and happy. His weakness was such as greatly to interrupt him in the pursuit of his studies, though not so great as to deprive him of his intellect, or to leave him to any strange chimeras of fancy, which I have frequently heard, but without any kind of ground, attributed to him. How it came to pass I know not, but it has so happened, that reports have been raised, propagated, and cur-

rently believed concerning the Doctor, that he has imagined such things concerning himself as would prove, if they were true, that he sometimes suffered a momentary eclipse of his intellectual faculties. But these reports were absolutely false and groundless. He saw his approaching dissolution with a mind perfectly calm and composed, without the least alarm or dismay; and I never could discover, though I was frequently with him, the least shadow of a doubt as to his future everlasting happiness, or any thing that looked like an unwillingness to die. How have I known him recite with a self-application those words in Heb. x. 36: "Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the promise!" And how have I heard him, upon leaving the family after supper, and withdrawing to rest, declare, with the sweetest composure, that if his Master was to say to him he had no more work for him to do, he should be glad to be dismissed that night! I once heard him say, with a kind of impatience, perhaps such as might in some degree trespass upon that submission we ought at all times to pay to the divine will, "I wonder why the great God should continue me in life, when I am incapable of performing him any further service." "His trust in God," says Dr. Jennings, in his funeral discourse, "through Jesus the Mediator, remained unshaken to the last." I know a person who enjoyed the Doctor's company

an hour or two a few months before his death, when his discourse was most devout and heavenly, and he particularly spoke of our dependence on Christ, observing that "if we parted with him, what would become of our hopes?" About the same time, I suppose it might be nearer his dissolution, I came into his study, found him alone, and sat down for conversation with him. With high pleasure he spoke concerning the Scripture method of salvation. Not a word did he say of what he had been or done in life, but his soul seemed to be swallowed up with gratitude and joy for the redemption of sinners by Jesus Christ. I have reason to regret that, upon leaving his company, I did not commit to writing the very words in which he expressed himself; but my recollection sufficiently serves me to authenticate this anecdote; and perhaps in all his days he was never in a frame of mind in which he more fully answered the description of the Apostle Peter, when he says, referring to our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. i. 8, "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." He has been heard to say, "I bless God I can lie down with comfort at night, not being solicitous whether I awake in this world or another." Again: "I should be glad to read more, yet not in order to be confirmed more in the truth of the Christian religion, or in the truth of its promises;

for I believe them enough to venture an eternity on them."

When he was almost worn out by his infirmities, he observed, in conversation with a friend, that he remembered an aged Minister used to say, that the most learned and knowing Christians, when they come to die, have only the same plain promises of the Gospel for their support, as the common and unlearned; "and so," said he, "I find it. They are the plain promises of the Gospel which are my support; and I bless God they are plain promises, which do not require much labour or pains to understand them; for I can do nothing now but look into my Bible for some promise to support me, and live upon that."

When he has found his spirit tending to impatience, and ready to complain, he would thus check himself: "The business of a Christian is to bear the will of God, as well as to do it. If I were in health, I could only be doing that; and that I may do now. The best thing in obedience is a regard to the will of God; and the way to that is to get our inclinations and aversions as much mortified as we can."

I visited the Doctor on his death-bed, where I found him exceedingly weak and low, the lamp of life very feebly glimmering in its last decay; but he was still in the perfect possession of his

understanding.* He told me, in answer to my inquiry, whether he had any pain in his body, that he had none, and acknowledged it as a great mercy. To my second question, how it was with his soul; whether all was comfortable there; he replied that it was; and confessed it to be a great mercy.

Mr. Joseph Parker, a person of most respect-

* Some time after Dr. Watts's death, Mr. Toplady published a fabulous account of this eminent man. He tells us "that little more than half an hour before Dr. Watts expired he was visited by his dear friend Mr. Whitefield. The latter asking him how he found himself, the dying Doctor answered, 'Here am I, one of Christ's waiting servants.' Soon after a medicine was brought in, and Mr. Whitefield assisted in raising him up upon the bed that he might with more conveniency take the draught. On the Doctor's apologizing for the trouble he gave Mr. Whitefield, the latter replied, with his usual amiable politeness, 'Surely, my dear brother, I am not too good to wait on a waiting servant of Christ.' Soon after Mr. Whitefield took his leave; and often regretted since that he had not prolonged his visit, which he would certainly have done could he have foreseen that his friend was but within half an hour's distance from the kingdom of glory." The whole of this story is fictitious; for Mr. Whitefield never visited the Doctor in his last illness or confinement, nor had any conversation or interview with him for some months before his decease. It were to be wished that greater care was practised by the writers of other persons' lives, that illusions might not take place, and obtain the regards of truth, and lay historians who come after them under the unpleasing necessity of dissolving their figments, and thereby in consequence evincing to the world how little credit is due to their relations.

able character, and the Doctor's amanuensis for about one-and-twenty years, sent the following intelligence concerning him to his brother at Southampton, only the day before his death, Nov. 24, 1748:—"I wrote to you by the last post, that we apprehended my master very near his end; and that we thought it not possible he should be alive when the letter reached your hands; and it will no doubt greatly surprise you to hear that he still lives. We ourselves are amazed at it. He passed through the last night in the main quiet and easy; but for five hours would receive nothing within his lips. I was down in his chamber early in the morning, and found him quite sensible. I begged he would be pleased to take a little liquid to moisten his mouth; and he received at my hand three tea-spoonfuls; and has done the like several times this day. Upon inquiry, he told me he lay easy, and his mind peaceful and serene. I said to him this morning, that he had taught us how to live, and was now teaching us how to die, by his patience and composure; for he has been remarkably in this frame for several days past. He replied, 'Yes.' I told him I hoped he experienced the comfort of these words, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' He answered, 'I do.' The ease of body and calmness of mind which he enjoys is a great mercy to him, and to us. His sick chamber has nothing terrifying in it. He is an upright man; and I doubt not but his end will

be peace. We are ready to use the words of Job, and say, 'We shall seek him in the morning, but he shall not be.' But God only knows, by whose power he is upheld in life, and for wise purposes no doubt. He told me he liked I should be with him. All other business is put off, and I am in the house night and day. I would administer all the relief that is in my power. He is worthy of all that can be done for him. I am your very faithful and truly afflicted servant."

On the 26th of November, the day after the Doctor's decease, Mr. Parker wrote again to the same person: "At length the fatal news is come. The spirit of the good man, my dear master, took its flight from the body to worlds unseen and joys unknown yesterday in the afternoon, without a struggle or a groan. My Lady Abney and Mrs. Abney are supported as well as we can reasonably expect. It is an house of mourning and tears; for I have told you before now that we all attended upon him and served him from a principle of love and esteem. May God forgive us all, that we have improved no more by him, while we enjoyed him!"

Thus did this great and good man, after an eminently holy and useful life, finish his course with joy; and the last sight of him to the eye of faith was not unlike that which the corporeal eye of Elisha had of Elijah, when he ascended in triumph to the heavenly glory. May I not apply

his delightful description of a saint launching into eternity to the Doctor himself?

"Thus Watts's soul forsakes this mortal stand
Fearless, when the great Master gives command:
Death is the storm, she smiles to hear it roar,
And bids the tempest waft her from the shore;
Then with a skilful helm she sweeps the seas,
And manages the raging storm with ease:
Her faith can govern death: she spreads her wings
Wide to the wind, and as she sails she sings,
And loses by degrees the sight of mortal things.
As the shores lessen, so her joys arise,
The waves roll gentler, and the tempest dies:
Now vast eternity fills all her sight,
She floats on the broad deep with infinite delight,
The seas for ever calm, the skies for ever bright.'

I saw the corpse of this excellent man in his coffin. The countenance appeared quite placid, like a person fallen into a gentle sleep, or such as the spirit might be supposed to leave behind it upon its willing departure to the celestial happiness. How justly might I have said at the moment I beheld his dead earth, as related to such an holy soul, as the Doctor does in an epitaph upon a pious young man, who was removed from our world after a lingering and painful illness!

"So sleep the saints and cease to groan,
When sin and death have done their worst:
Christ has a glory like his own
Which waits to clothe their waking dust."

Or might I not have broken out, upon the sight of his lifeless clay, and in the faith of future glory, in the lines, somewhat varied, of Mr. Prior to Dr. Sherlock?

"Thus in full age and hoary holiness
Thou hast ascended to thy promised bliss;
Untouch'd thy tomb, uninjured be thy dust,
As thine own fame among the future just,
Till in last sounds the dreadful trumpet speaks,
Till judgment calls and quicken'd nature wakes,
Till through the utmost earth and deepest sea
Our scatter'd atoms find their destined way
In haste to clothe their kindred souls again,
Perfect our state, and build immortal man;
Then fearless thou, who well sustain'd the fight,
To paths of joy and tracks of endless light
Lead up all those who heard thee and believed;
'Midst thine own flock, great shepherd, be received,
And glad all heaven with myriads thou hast saved."

His stature was beneath the common standard, perhaps not above five feet, or at most five feet two inches; but without any thing like a deformity in his frame. His body was spare and lean, his face oval, his nose aquiline, his complexion fair and pale, his forehead low, his cheek-bones rather prominent, but his countenance, on the whole, by no means disagreeable. His eyes were small and grey; and, whenever he was attentive or eager, amazingly piercing and expressive. His voice was rather too fine and slender, at least would have been thought so if he had been of a

larger mould; but it was regular, audible, and pleasant.

He had a most vivid and abounding genius, joined with the most patient indefatigable industry; a quick conception, with a tenacious memory; a great mind strengthened and cultivated by study, and replenished with the treasures of a vast and noble literature.

As a proof of his faithful memory, I well remember his repeating in conversation several verses of Juvenal without the least hesitation. When he had ended them, I asked him how long it might be since he had read that poet. His answer was, "Never since I was a young man."

Dr. Jennings, in his funeral discourse, very justly observes concerning him, "that though that which gave him the most remarkable pre-eminence was the extent and sublimity of his imagination, yet how few have excelled or even equalled him in quickness of apprehension and solidity of judgment!"

The late Lord Barrington, in a letter to the Doctor, giving his opinion of one of his then recent publications, tells him, "that he was singularly happy in the distinctness of his thoughts, and the clearness of his expression; and that no one could exceed him in a felicity of ranging the ideas he would convey to us." He then adds, "The scheme you have proposed could come only from a man of great acuteness and intense thought.

The whole work shows a vast reading of the Bible, and that you have every text in it ready for use."

He had the copious and heavenly knowledge of the Divine, the clear perception and patient thinking of the philosopher, and the rich imagination and sublime rapture of the poet; one of which characters, in such a high degree as he possessed it, might have been sufficient to have raised him an immortal fame. He was pious without ostentation; devout without enthusiasm; humble without disguise; patient without fainting or complaint; faithful without morosity; firm without rigour; zealous without fury; and studious without gloom or stiffness. With equal truth, I might add, that he was pleasant without levity; mild without meanness; learned without pride; polite without dissimulation; bountiful without vanity or imprudence; and pure and temperate without the least shadow of the contrary vices. In his whole course of life he appeared to have a single eye to the glory of God, and the good of men. The Gospel of salvation he diffused in a wide extent from the pulpit, but in a much wider from the press; and he enforced and adorned what he recommended by an uncommon exactness of life, and sanctity of manners. He was a living epistle of his Lord and Saviour, deeply inscribed with his honours, and known and read of all men. Perhaps very few of the descendants of Adam

have made nearer approaches to angels in intellectual powers and divine dispositions than Dr. Watts; and among the numerous stars which have adorned the hemisphere of the Christian church, he has shone and will shine an orb of the first magnitude.

A Latin epitaph, of which the following is a translation, was written by the Rev. Daniel Turner:—

Sacred to the Memory of Isaac Watts, D.D.

This monumental inscription
Commemorates the very Reverend
Isaac Watts, D. D.,
The man so justly celebrated
By universal fame.

He had a weak and languid body,
But a soul akin to heaven,
Vigorous, sagacious,
And prepared for every thing excellent;
Adorned with universal literature,
And, what is still more,
With real piety.

He lived an illustrious example
Of pure benevolence,
Extraordinary humility,
And every kind of virtue;
Greatly beloved both of God and man.

He was a Preacher
Of admirably sweet and powerful elocution;
A sincere lover
And pacific promoter
Of truth;
For many years
A faithful and vigilant Pastor
Of a Christian society
In London:
The excellent poet,
Who, inspired by a Muse truly divine,
Gave us the Psalms of David in English verse,
Happily adapted to the Christian state and worship,
And published besides many pieces
In sublime, polite, and harmonious numbers,
Some sacred to virtue and friendship,
And others to the name and grace
Of the Lord Jesus;
All of them the delight of the pious.
He published also
Several tracts in prose
On divine subjects, and the liberal arts;
In all which,
The great strength of his genius,
The acuteness of his judgment,
And the goodness of his heart
Are illustriously displayed.
At length,
Worn out with age, sickness, and the toils
Of a very useful life, he died,

Nov. 25, 1748, in the 75th year of his age,
Much lamented by all,
Especially by the wise and the good.

But, though a ruin so deplorable
Has crushed his tenement of clay,
The indwelling mind,
Unsubdued by death,
And freed from mortal chains,
Has reached her kindred skies,
And lives divinely blest;
Yet waits with strong desire
The wondrous day of old predicted,
When the archangel's trump
Shall shake the astonished globe,
And call the dust
Now treasured in the tomb
To life immortal.

When, how good, and great,
And worthy of praise he was,
(Which nor the Muse nor Fame can tell,)
Reader, thou shalt know,
And all the world admire!

It will be easily perceived, from the preceding narrative, that the foundation of all Dr. Watts's eminence was his early piety. He was trained up by his godly parents in the instruction and discipline of the Lord; and was thus led to an

entire surrender of himself to God, before his heart was hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, and before any habits of evil had been confirmed. What an encouraging example, both to parents and children!

That he possessed greater strength of intellect than is allotted to the generality of mankind, no one will deny; but he wisely saw that mental power without due cultivation is of little avail; and hence his indefatigable application to study. In youth and in age he was intent upon the enlargement of his mind by the acquisition of knowledge. Through life he was a hard student, diligently improving his time, that he might be able, in the most effectual manner, to instruct others. Many a man richly endowed by nature has fallen immensely short of what he might have been, by yielding to indolence and gossip. The attainments of Dr. Watts, as a scholar, are the more to be admired, because of the state of affliction and suffering in which the greater part of his life was spent. Even languor and disease could not abate his ardour in study. We are not therefore surprised, that his accomplishments, as a Christian Preacher and Divine, have been rarely surpassed. It is impossible to fix limits to the attainments which, through God's blessing, may be realized by persevering application.

Dr. Watts's spirit was eminently liberal and catholic; and hence his works are almost equally

acceptable to orthodox Christians of all denominations. He was a Dissenter; but he lived in friendly intercourse with Ministers belonging to the established Church. He had a deep and solemn conviction of the evil of Popery, as a wicked perversion of divine truth, and as hostile both to civil and religious liberty. Regarding King William as an instrument in the hands of Almighty God of preserving this nation from that bitter curse, and of preserving the interests of Protestantism, he cherished a strong regard for that Monarch, and poured out his thanks to heaven for the liberty which the nation enjoyed as the fruit of the revolution. Sooner would this good man have submitted that his right arm should be severed from his body, than connect himself with Papists, infidels, and libertines, in attempts to weaken the interests of Protestant Christianity.

His theological views appear to have been substantially those of Richard Baxter. At one period of his life he was led into some unprofitable and dangerous speculations concerning the person of Christ; but his writings in general are unexceptionable, and very useful; though his Calvinism occasionally hampers him, and leads him into inconsistencies. Few writers have ever exerted so powerful an influence. His Hymns for Children often supply the first religious and moral impressions of infancy; his "Logic" and "Improvement of the Mind" afford most important and valuable

assistance in the studies of youth; and his Sermons and other practical works nourish the piety of adult Christians. But his Psalms and Hymns are, beyond all comparison, the most useful of his compositions. Not a few of these are eminently beautiful. They breathe the true spirit of scriptural Christianity. For more than a hundred years they have assisted the devotions of the closet, of the family, and of public religious assemblies. The spiritual good of which they have thus been the means exceeds and baffles all our conceptions, and will only be fully ascertained in eternity. This is an honour to which few even of the wisest and holiest of men can lay claim, and which perhaps only one man, the Rev. Charles Wesley, possesses in an equal degree. Long since, we have reason to believe, these two blessed men, the poets of the church, have met in the presence of their common Saviour, whose sufferings and glory formed the subjects of their song; and as their genius and piety were his gifts, they have laid their honours at his feet, and will for ever render to him the glory of all the good that has been effected by their instrumentality.

THE LIFE

MR. THOMAS HALIBURTON.

THE PREFACE.

1. "THE kingdom of God," saith our blessed Lord, "is within you." It is no outward, no distant thing; "but a well of living water" in the soul, "springing up into everlasting life." It "is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." It is holiness and happiness.

2. The general manner wherein it pleases God to set it up in the heart is this. A sinner, being drawn by the love of the Father, enlightened by the Son, ("the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,") and convinced of sin by the Holy Ghost; through the preventing grace which is given him freely, cometh weary and heavy laden, and casteth all his sins upon him that is "mighty to save." He receiveth from him true living faith. Being justified by faith, he hath peace with God: he rejoices in hope of the glory of God, and knows that sin hath no more dominion over him. And the love of God is shed abroad in his heart, producing all holiness of heart and of conversation.

3. This work of God in the soul of man is so described in the following treatise, as I have not

seen it in any other, either ancient or modern, in our own or any other language. So that I cannot but value it next to the holy Scriptures, above any other human composition, excepting only the "Christian Pattern," and the small remains of Clemens Romanus, Polycarp, and Ignatius.

4. Yet this great servant of God at some times fell back from the glorious liberty he had received, into the spirit of fear and sin and bondage: but why was it thus? Because the hand of the Lord was shortened? No, verily: but because he did not abide in Christ; because he did not cleave to him with all his heart; because he grieved the Holy Spirit wherewith he was sealed, by some, perhaps, undiscerned unfaithfulness; who thereupon for a season departing from him left him weak and like another man.

5. But it may be said, "The Gospel covenant does not promise entire freedom from sin." What do you mean by the word "sin?" those numberless weaknesses and follies sometimes, improperly, termed sins of infirmity? If you mean only this, we shall not put off these but with our bodies. But if you mean, "It does not promise entire freedom from sin, in its proper sense, or from committing sin;" this is by no means true, unless the Scripture be false; for thus it is written, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;" unless he lose the Spirit of adoption, if not finally, yet for a while, as did this child of God;

"for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." He cannot sin so long as he "keepeth himself;" for then "that wicked one toucheth him not." 1 John iii. 9; v. 18.

6. We see then how to judge of that other assertion, "that the mercy of God to his sons in Christ Jesus extends to all infirmities, follies, and sins; multiplied relapses not excepted." We grant, many of the children of God find mercy, notwithstanding multiplied relapses; but though it is possible a man may be a child of God, who is not fully freed from sin, it does not follow that freedom from sin is impossible, or that it is not to be expected by all; for it is promised; it is described by the Holy Ghost as the common privilege of all; and "God will be mindful" (O let us be so!) "of his covenant and promise which he hath made to a thousand generations."

7. This caution is necessary to be remembered, that ye who are weak be not offended. Neither be ye offended, when ye hear the wisdom of the world pronounce all this mere enthusiasm: a hard word, which most of those who are fondest of it, no more understand than they do Arabic. Ask, in the spirit of meekness, him who calls it so, "Is the kingdom of God set up in your soul? Do you feel that peace of God which passeth all understanding? Do you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory? Is the love of God

shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in you?" If not, you are no judge of these matters; you cannot discern the things of the Spirit of God; they are enthusiasm, madness, foolishness to you: for they are spiritually discerned.

8. Ask such a one, but with meekness and love, "Are you taught of God? Do you know that he abideth in you? Have you the revelation of the Holy Ghost," (they are the words of our own Church,) "inspiring into you the true meaning of Scripture?" If you have not, with all your human science and worldly wisdom, you know nothing yet as you ought to know. Whatever you are in other respects, as to the things of God you are an unlearned and ignorant man. And if you are unstable too, you will wrest these as you do also the other scriptures to your own destruction.

9. Be not then surprised, ye that wait for peace, and joy, and love, through faith in the blood of Jesus, that such judges as these are continually crying out "Enthusiasm!" if you speak of the inward operations of the Holy Ghost. And as to you who have already peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who now feel his love shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto you, with whose spirit the Spirit of God beareth witness that ye are the sons of God; it is your part to confirm your love

toward them in all lowliness and meekness: (for who is it that maketh thee to differ? or what hast thou which thou hast not received?) and to plead earnestly for them at the throne of grace, that the day-star may appear in their hearts also, and the sun of righteousness at length arise upon them with healing in his wings!

JOHN WESLEY.

LONDON,
Feb. 9th, 1738–9.

THE LIFE

OF

MR. HALIBURTON.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

1. Mr. Thomas Haliburton was born at Duplin, in the parish of Aberdalgy, (of which his father was some time Minister,) on December 25, 1674. The three former parts of the following account were written by himself; the last is partly extracted from his diary, and partly taken from eye and ear witnesses.

2. The common occurrences of the life of one in all respects so inconsiderable are not worth recording, and if recorded, could be of little use either to myself or others. But if I can recount what has passed between God and my soul, so as to discover not only the parts of this work, the several advances it made, the opposition of the world, the devil, and my own heart, if I can

represent this work in its order, it may be of great use to my own establishment; and should it fall into the hands of any other Christian, it may not be unuseful: for the work of God in all is, as to the substance, the same and uniform; and as face answers to face in a glass, so does one Christian's experience answer to another's; and both to the word of God.

3. I came into the world with a nature wholly corrupted, and a heart fully set in me to do evil: and from the morning of my days, though I was under the great light of the Gospel, and the inspection of pious parents, and not yet corrupted by custom; yet the imaginations of my heart, and the whole tenor of my life, were only evil continually.

4. Indeed, in this period of my life, I had unusual advantages; my parents were eminently religious; I continually heard the sound of divine truth in their instructions, and had the beauty of holiness set before my eyes in their example. They kept me from ill company, and habituated me early to such outward duties as I was capable of. But this care of my father, during his life, (which ended October, 1682,) and of my mother after his death, did not change, but only hide, nature. And though I cannot remember all the particulars, from the fourth or fifth year of my life, yet I do remember the general bent of my mind, which was even then wholly set against God: insomuch, that when I now survey the

decalogue, and review this portion of my time, notwithstanding the great distance, I still distinctly remember, and could easily enumerate, many instances of the opposition of my heart unto every one of its precepts.

5. For many years, it is true, the sins of this part of my life were entirely out of my thoughts. But when God began to convince me of sin, even those I had long since forgotten, those that were of an older date than any thing else I could remember, and not attended with any such remarkable circumstances as could be supposed to make a deep impression on my memory, were brought on my mind with unusual distinctness. Whence I cannot but observe, (1.) What exact notice the holy God takes of what men pass over as pardonable follies. (2.) How just reason we have to fear, that, in the strokes we feel in riper years, God is "making us to possess the iniquities of our youth." (3.) What an exact register conscience, God's deputy, keeps; how early it begins; how accurate it is (even when it seems to sleep); and how it will justify his severity against sinners at the last day. O how far up will it fetch its accounts of those evils which we mind nothing of, when God shall open our eyes to discern those prints which he setteth upon the heels of our feet; when the books shall be opened, and the dead, small and great, judged out of the things that are written therein!

6. When I review this period of my life, what reason have I to be ashamed, and even confounded, to think I have spent ten years of a short life, without almost a rational thought, undoubtedly without any that was not sinful! And this being matter of undoubted experience, I have herein a strong confirmation of my faith, as to the guilt of Adam's sin, and its imputation to his posterity: for, (1.) From a child, the bent of my soul was "enmity against God." Nor was this the effect of custom or education. No: there was a sweet conspiracy of precept, discipline, and example to carry me the contrary way. Nor can I charge the fault of this on my constitution of body, or any thing that might in a natural way proceed from my parents. Yet was this enmity so strong as not to be suppressed, much less subdued, by the utmost care, and the best outward means. This is undoubted fact. (2.) To say, I was thus originally framed, without respect to any sin chargeable on me, is a position so full of flat contrariety to all the notions I can entertain of God, to his wisdom, his equity, and his goodness, that I cannot think of it without horror. (3.) Penal then this corruption must be, as death and diseases are. And whereof can it be a punishment, if not of Adam's sin? While then these things are so plain in fact, and the deduction so easy from them, whatever subtle arguments any use against this great truth, I have no reason to be moved thereby.

7. Hence, lastly, I am taught what estimate to make of those good inclinations with which some are said to be born. Either they are the early effects of preventing grace, or of education, custom, occasional restraints, and freedom from temptation. A natural temper may easily be influenced by some of these, and by the constitution of the body, to a distaste of those grosser sins which make the most noise in the world. Yet all this is but sin under a disguise; and the odds is not great. The one sort of sinners promise good fruit, but deceive; whereas the only profane forbid expectation. And yet of this last sort more receive the Gospel than of the former. "A certain man had two sons. And he came to the first, and said, Son, go work this day in my vineyard. He answered, and said, I will not: but afterwards he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, Sir; and went not. Verily I say unto you, The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you."

CHAPTER II.

1. In May, 1685, I went with my mother into Holland; and being in some danger while we were at sea, my conscience, till then asleep, began to

awaken, and to be terrified with apprehensions of death. But all this concern was nothing more than natural fear, and a selfish desire of preservation. I was unwilling to die, and afraid of hell: it was not sin, but the consequence of it, I wanted to escape. The glory of God I was not concerned for at all; and accordingly was the event. I promised, that were I at land I would keep all his commands. My mother told me it would not hold. But I was too ignorant of my own heart to believe her: I multiplied engagements, and doubted not but I should perform them. But no sooner was I fixed at Rotterdam, than I forgot all my promises and resolutions. The unrenewed heart, being free from the force put upon it, fell again into its old course. Nay, I grew still worse: the corruption which stopped for a while, now ran with greater violence. It is true, my awe for my mother, and the power of education, still restrained me from open sins: but to many secret things I was strongly inclined, and in many instances followed my inclination; being a ready and easy prey to every temptation, notwithstanding all my engagements.

2 My sins here had this grievous aggravation, they were committed against greater light, and more of the means of grace, than I had ever before enjoyed. We had sermons almost every day, and were catechised every Saturday. My mother took care I should attend most of these, and at the

same time private duties, praying with me and for me, and obliging me to read the Scripture, and other useful books. But so far was all this from having its due effect, that I was weary of it, and went on in sin; though not without frequent convictions, occasioned sometimes by the preaching of the word, sometimes by the remains of my education. Yet all these were only as the starts of a sleepy man, disturbed by some sudden noise: he stirs a little, but soon sinks down again faster asleep than before. I easily freed myself from them, either by promising to hear or comply with them afterward, by withdrawing from the means of conviction, by extenuating my sins, or by turning my eye to something I thought good in myself, though God knows I had little which had even the appearance of it. At other times I looked to the tendency of these convictions, viz., the engaging me to be holy; and then I pored upon the difficulties of that course, till I had frighted myself from a compliance with them. If all these shifts failed, I then betook myself to diversions, which soon choked the word, and all convictions from it.

3. In December, 1686, upon the earnest desire of my father's sister, married to the Provost of Perth, I was sent home. While I stayed in this family, I saw nothing of religion; and I easily took the liberty they gave, and made fair advances toward rejecting the very form of it. My aversion

to those sins which, through the influence of my education, I abominated before, sensibly weakened. My hate to learning increased, which I looked on as a burden and a drudgery, worse than the basest employment. And many a sinful shift did I betake myself to, that I might get the time shuffled over. In spring my mother came to me. I was then so rooted in ill, that in spite of natural affection, I was grieved at her return; and when I first heard her voice, it damped me. I cared not to see her: nor was there any thing I disliked more than her conversation. I feared to be questioned as to what was past, or to be restrained from my sinful liberty. However, in the beginning of summer, my mother took me again to Rotterdam, and put me to Erasmus's school there. Here, though I stayed not long, the method of teaching took with me, so that I began to delight in learning. But otherwise I was still worse and worse, under all the means God made use of to bring me to himself.

CHAPTER III.

1. In the beginning of autumn, 1681, we returned home, and fixed at Perth. Here I was immediately sent to school, and made more progress in learning than before. But as to religion,

I continued as unconcerned about and as averse from it as ever. However I behaved myself under my mother's eye, when I was with my comrades I took my full liberty, and, notwithstanding my greater knowledge, ran with them into all the same follies and extravagancies. And thus I continued till toward the close of King James's reign; when the fear of some sudden stroke from the Papists, of which there was every where a great noise, revived my concern about religion. Of this, being somewhat deeper than before, I shall endeavour to give a distinct account.

2. It was about this time that God, by the preaching of the word, and by catechising in public and private, enlightened my mind farther with the notional knowledge of the law and of the Gospel. And thus sin was left without excuse, and conscience being armed with more knowledge, its checks were more frequent and sharp, and not so easily evaded. Some touches of sickness too riveted in me the impressions of frailty and mortality, and the tendency of each of those numerous diseases to which we are daily exposed. And hereby I was brought into, and kept under, continual bondage through fear of death.

3. I was now cast into the most grievous disquietude, having sorrow in my heart daily. I was in a dreadful strait between two. On the one hand, my fears gave an edge to my convictions of sin: this made me attend more to the word of

God; the more I attended to it, they increased the more, and I saw that there was no way to be freed from them but by being thoroughly religious. On the other hand, if I should engage in religion in earnest, I saw the hazard of suffering, perhaps dying, for it. And this I could not think of. Betwixt both I was dreadfully tossed, so that for some nights sleep went from my eyes. There was often impressed on my fancy, one holding a dagger to my breast, with, "Quit your religion, or die;" and that so strongly, that I have almost fainted under it, being still terribly unresolved what to do. Sometimes I would let him give the fatal stroke; but then my spirits failed, and my heart sunk within me. At other times I resolved to quit my religion, and take it again when the danger was passed. But neither could I find rest here. "What," thought I, "if he should destroy me afterward, and so I lose both life and religion? Or what, if I die before the danger is past, and so have no time to take it again?"

4. For near a year, few weeks, nay, few days and nights, passed over me without these struggles. But after King James's army was overthrown on July 27, 1689, I soon grew as remiss as before. All my remaining difficulty was to stifle my convictions, which I endeavoured partly by a more careful attendance on outward duties; partly by promising to abstain from those sins which most directly crossed my light; and partly by resolving to

inquire farther into the will of God, and to comply with it hereafter.

5. But these courses afforded no solid repose. The first sin against light, or omission of duty, shook all, and I was confounded at the thoughts of appearing before God in such a righteousness. Indeed, I had some ease when trials were at a distance, but it vanished on their approach. This was not "gold tried in the fire," nor would it abide so much as a near view of danger; but at the very appearance of a storm, the sandy foundation fell away.

6. The effects of my being thus exercised were, (1.) I was brought to doubt of the truths of religion. Whenever I would have built on them in time of distress, a suspicion secretly haunted me, "What, if these things are not so? Have I a certainty and evidence about them, answerable to the weight that is to be laid upon them?" Death, and the trouble attending it, were certain things: but I was not so certain of the truths of religion. Still, when, under apprehensions of death, I would have taken rest therein, my mind began to waver. Not that I could give any reason for it: but the way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble. (2.) I found plainly hereby that I could never have peace till I came to another sort of certainty about religion. Death I saw was unavoidable, and might be sudden; nor could I banish the thoughts of it. Therefore I

concluded, "Unless I obtain such a conviction of religion, and such an interest in it, as will make me look death in the face, not only without fear, but with joy; good it were I had never been born." But how or where this was to be obtained, I was utterly uncertain. Here I lay in great perplexity, under the melancholy sense that I had hitherto "spent my money for that which is not bread, and my labour for that which profiteth not." (3.) This perplexity was somewhat eased one day, while I was reading how Mr. Robert Bruce was in a doubt, even concerning the being of God, who yet afterwards came to the fullest satisfaction. I then felt a secret hope, that some time, in one way or other, God might thus satisfy me. Here was the dawning of a light, which though it was not soon cleared up, yet was never wholly put out again; a light which, though as yet it was far from satisfying, yet kept me from utter despair.

7. About this time one Mr. Donaldson, a reverend old Clergyman, preached at Perth, and coming to visit my mother, called for me, and asked me, among other questions, "if I sought a blessing upon my learning." I frankly answered, "No." He replied, with a severe look, "Sirrah, unsanctified learning has done much mischief in the church of God." This saying left so deep an impression on me ever after, that whenever I was any way straitened, I applied to God by prayer for help in my learning, and pardon for not seeking

it before. Yet as to the main, I was still afar from God, and an enemy to him both in my heart and works.

CHAPTER IV.

1. For the better advantage of my education, my mother, in 1690, removed with me to Edinburgh. I was now again put to school, and in November, 1692, entered at the college. Here my knowledge of the law of God daily increased, and therewith my knowledge of sin. I saw more and more that he was displeased with me for sins which formerly I had not observed. The impressions of my mortality were likewise riveted in me by new afflictions, and I was more in bondage through the growing fear of death. Again: the Scriptures being now daily preached, forced me to some inquiry into my own sincerity in religion; and I was willing, provided I might save my bosom-idols, not only to hear, but to do many things.

2. I was now carried far in a form of religion. I prayed not only morning and evening, but at other times too; I wept much in secret; I read and meditated, and resolved to live otherwise than I had done. But this goodness too was as the morning cloud. It was force, and not nature; and therefore could not be expected to last any longer than the force which occasioned it.

3. While I was under this distress many a wretched shift did I betake myself to for relief. When I read or heard searching things, if any thing that was said seemed to make for me, I greedily catched hold of it. When I found somewhat required that I neither did, nor could even resolve to, comply with, I thought to compound, and make amends some other way. Or else I questioned, whether God had required it or no? whether he that taught so was not mistaken? and whether I might not be in a state of salvation, without those marks of it which he assigned? Again: many times, when I would not see, I quarreled with Ministers and books for not speaking plainly. Always I carefully sought for the lowest marks, and the least degrees of grace, that were saving; for I designed but just so much religion as would take me to heaven, the very least that would serve this turn. And when none of these shifts availed, I resolved, in general, to do all that God commanded. But I soon retracted, when he tried me in any particulars that were contrary to my inclination. And when I saw I must do it, I begged a little respite: with St. Austin, "I was content to be holy, but not yet:" forgetting that a delay is, in God's account, a refusal; since all commands require present obedience. After all ways were tried, I blamed my education. I knew religion was a change of heart; but whether mine had undergone this

change was the question. "Now," thought I, "if I had not been educated religiously, but had changed all at once, it would have been more easily discernible." Thus was I entangled in my own ways; and even seeking wisdom, I found it not.

4. Although I now seemed to have gone far, yet I was indeed wholly wrong. For being convinced of the necessity of righteousness, but ignorant of Christ, I sought it by the works of the law. Therefore "the carnal mind which was enmity against God" still continued in me; and all my struggling was only a tossing to and fro, between light and love of sin, wherein sin was still conqueror; for my bosom-idols I could not part with. Besides, the small religion I had was not abiding, but rose and fell with the above-mentioned occasions.

5. About this time Clark's "Martyrology" came into my hands. I loved history, and read it greedily. The patience, courage, and joy of the martyrs convinced me, that there was a reality in religion, beyond the power of nature. I was convinced, likewise, that I was a stranger to it, because I could not think of suffering. And withal I felt some faint desires after it, so far at least as often to join in Balaam's wish, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

6. At this time, likewise, God restrained me from many follies I was inclined to, by bodily

infirmity. He provided me too with friends who were very tender of me. He fed me, though I knew him not. But so far was I from being thankful for these mercies, that my proud heart fretted at them. O what reason have I to say, "The Lord is good even to the evil and unthankful!"

CHAPTER V.

1. The air of Edinburgh agreeing neither with my mother nor me, in May, 1693, she removed to St. Andrew's. And here I came under the care of Mr. Taylor, a wise man, and one very careful of me. Thus, chased as I was from place to place, God every where provided me with friends. And now by the searching ministry of Mr. Forrester, he began to give me some small discovery of the more spiritual evils of my soul. He opened to me first the pride of my heart, and the wickedness and injustice of valuing myself upon those deliverances from my own weakness, which had been wholly wrought by his strength. I likewise saw the impiety of drawing near to him with my mouth, while my heart was far from him; and, indeed, of trusting to any outward performance, without the life of all, faith working by love.

2. This, added to what I was conscious of

before, frequently threw me into racking perplexity; when, finding no peace in any of my former evasions, I resolved to enter into a solemn covenant with God: and having wrote and subscribed this, I believed all was right. I found a sort of present peace; amendment I thought sufficient atonement, and such an engagement I looked on as a performance. I now, likewise, often found an unusual sweetness in hearing the word, and sometimes the most piercing convictions: and these were indeed a taste of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.

3. But the merciful God would not let me rest here: the peace I found by making this covenant was soon lost by breaking it; at the same time my heart smote me for my oldest sins, by which I found former accounts to be still standing against me, which filled me with confusion and jealousies of these ways. I perceived, too, something of the treachery of my engagements, and that my heart had not been sound therein, but had secret reserves for some sins, which were then given up in word only. God also let loose some of my corruptions upon me; which, as soon as his restraint was taken off, were more violent than ever, and bore down before them all that I had set in their way. By these means he discovered to me the fruitlessness of my covenant, and threw me afresh into the utmost confusion;

while the evil I thought so effectually provided against, again came upon me.

4. Yet, notwithstanding I felt the vanity of those ways, I still adhered to them; I again trusted my own heart, and hoped to recover by renewing the peace I lost by breaking my covenant; I laid the blame on some accidental defect in my former management, and thought, were that mended, all would be well. When I found something wanting still, I contrived to make it up with something extraordinary of my own, with the multiplication of prayers, or of some outward duty or other. But all these refuges failed, and my life was so thoroughly miserable while I was pursuing them, that, had not the infinite mercy of God prevented, one of these effects had surely followed. Either, (1.) The convictions I was under would have ceased, God giving over his striving with me; and then having attained to a form of godliness, I should have rested therein and looked no farther. Or, (2.) If those convictions had continued, and I had been left to my own way, I should have "laboured in the fire all my days, wearying myself with vanity," in a continual vicissitude of resolutions and breaches, security and disquietude; engagements and sins, false peace and racking anxiety, by turns taking place. Or, (3.) When I had wearied myself in vain, I should have utterly given up religion, and gone over, if not to direct atheism, at least to

open profaneness. Or, lastly, being forced to seek shelter somewhere, and being so sadly disappointed in all the ways I tried, I had said, "This evil is of the Lord, why wait I any longer?" and so sunk in final despair. And, in fact, I had some experience of all these. Sometimes I sat down with the bare form. Sometimes I wearied myself in running from one of these vain courses to another. At other times, finding no profit, I turned careless, and was on the point of throwing off all religion: and very often I was driven almost to distraction, and stood on the very brink of despair.

5. When I have been disappointed again and again, I was in the utmost perplexity to find where the fault lay. I found this way of covenanting with God mentioned in Scripture, recommended by Ministers, and approved by the experience of all the people of God. I could not tax myself with guile in doing it: I was resolved to perform the engagement I had made. I made it with much concern and solemnity, and for some time kept it strictly. But though I could not then see where the failing was, I have since been enabled to see it clearly. (1.) Being ignorant of the righteousness of God, I was still establishing a righteousness of my own; and, though in words I renounced this, yet in fact I sought righteousness and peace, not in the Lord Jesus, but in my own covenants and engage-

ments, so that I really put them in Christ's room: and as to forgiveness of sins, my real trust was not in his blood, but in the evenness of my own walking. Therefore I obtained not righteousness, because I still sought it as it were by the works of the law. And it was evident I did so, by this plain sign: whenever I was challenged for sin, instead of recourse to the blood of Christ, I still sought peace only in renewing my vows again; the consent I gave to the law was not from the reconcilement of my heart to its holiness, but merely from fear. The enmity against it continued; nor would I have chosen it, had that force been away. Farther: my eye was not single; provided I was safe, I had no concern for the glory of God. In a word, I engaged, before God had thoroughly engaged me. We may be in a sort willing, before he hath made us truly so. But the first real kindness begins with him; and we never love till his goodness draws us. Fear may indeed overpower us into something like it, as it did me. I was willing to be saved from hell; but not to be saved in God's way, and in order to those ends he proposes in our salvation.

6. This was not my only trouble. I was now engaged in metaphysics and natural divinity; accustomed to subtle notions, and pleased with them; whence, by the just permission of God, the devil took occasion to cast me into doubts about the great truths of religion, especially the

being of a God. I not only felt, as formerly, the want of evidence for it, but various arguments were suggested against it. But though the enmity of my heart against God was still great, yet he suffered me not to yield to them. There remained so much evidence of his being, in his works of creation and providence, as made me recoil at the terrible conclusion aimed at by those arguments; and being likewise affected with deep apprehensions of the shortness and uncertainty of the present life, I dreaded a supposition that shook the foundations of any hope of relief from the other side of time.

7. In this strait between light and darkness, as my disturbance was from my own reasonings, so from the same I sought my relief. By these I hoped to obtain establishment in the truth, and answer to all objections against it. I therefore seriously set myself to search for demonstrative arguments: and I found them, but found no relief. The most forcible of them indeed extorted assent by the absurdity of the contrary conclusion; but not giving me any satisfying discoveries of that God whose existence they obliged me to own, my mind was not quieted. Nay, and besides, those arguments not dissolving contrary objections, whenever the light of them was removed, and those objections came again in view, I was again exceedingly shaken; I was like him who, reading Plato "Of the Immortality

of the Soul," said, "While I read, I assent; but, I cannot tell how, so soon as I lay down the book, all my assent is gone."

8. I still hoped to attain what I had hitherto failed of, by some farther progress in learning; but all in vain: the farther I went, the greater was my disappointment, the more difficulties I continually met with, and found "he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." When this would not avail, then I spent my weary hours in vain wishes for some extraordinary discoveries. Nay, but "if one arose from the dead, they will not believe." And this, notwithstanding my disappointment, I gained: I was somewhat beat from that towering opinion of my knowledge and abilities which my first seeming success in philosophy gave me, and brought to a diffidence of myself.

9. But still my corruptions took daily root, and increased in strength by my weak resistance. Yet I had a fair form of religion. I avoided all those sins that plainly thwarted the light of my conscience. I abstained from those evils which even the more serious students gave into, and kept at a distance from the occasions of them. I was more exact in attending both public and private prayer, and not without some concern for my inward frame in them. When I was ensnared into any sin, or omission of any duty, I was deeply sorrowful. I had a kindness for all that feared

God, and a pleasure in their converse, especially on religion. I had frequent tastes of the good word of God, which made me delight in approaching him. I had many returns to prayer: when, under a deep sense of my impotence, I betook me to God in any strait, I was so remarkably helped, that I could not but observe it. Hereby God drew me gradually in, to expect every good gift from above, and encouraged the very faintest beginnings of a look toward a return.

10. But though by these means I got a name to live, yet was I really dead. For, (1.) My natural darkness still remained, though with some small dawnings of light. (2.) The enmity of my mind against the law of God was yet untaken away. I had not a respect unto all his commands, nor a sight of the beauty of holiness; neither did my heart approve of the whole yoke of Christ, as good and desirable; and I complied with it in part, not from a delight therein, but because I saw I was undone without it. (3.) I yet "sought righteousness as it were by the works of the law:" I was wholly legal in all I did; not seeing the necessity, the security, the glory of the Gospel method of salvation, by seeking righteousness and strength in the Lord Christ alone. Lastly, self was the spring of all: my sole aim was to save myself, without any regard to the glory of God, or any inquiry how it could consist with it to save one who had so deeply

offended. In a word, all my religion was servile, constrained, and anti-evangelical.

11. From the foregoing passages, I cannot but observe, (1.) What a depth of deceitfulness there is in the heart of man. How many shifts did mine use to elude the design of all those strivings of the Spirit of the Lord with me! I have told many, but the one half is not told. And all these respect but one point in religion. If a single man were to recount the more remarkable deceits, with respect to the whole of his behaviour, how many volumes must he write! And if so many may be seen, how many secret, undiscernible, or at least undiscerned, deceits must still remain! So much truth is there couched in that short scripture, "The heart is deceitful above all things: who can know it?"

I observe, (2.) How far we may go toward religion, and yet come short of it. I had and did many things. I heard the Scriptures gladly. I was "almost persuaded to be a Christian:" I had "escaped the" outward "pollutions that are in the world:" yea, I seemed "enlightened, and a partaker of the heavenly gift;" having many times "tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come." I had undergone many changes, but not the great change; I was not born of God; I was not begotten anew, and made a child of God through a living faith in Jesus Christ.

Again: I cannot but look back with wonder at the astonishing patience of God, which suffered my manners so long, and the steadiness he showed in pursuing his work, notwithstanding all my provocations. All the creation could not have afforded so much forbearance: the disciples of Christ would have called for fire from heaven; yea, Moses would have found more here to irritate him than at Meribah. Glory be to God, that we have to do with him, and not with man. His ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts; but as the heavens are high above the earth, so are his ways and thoughts of mercy above ours.

Fourthly. I must bear witness to the reasonableness of God's way. It did not destroy my faculties, but improve them. He enlightened my eyes to see what he would have me to do, and did not force, but gradually persuade me to comply with it. This was not to compel, but gently bend the will, to the things that were really fit for it to incline to; nor did he ever oblige me to part with any sin, till he had let me see it was against my interest as well as duty; and the smallest piece of compliance with his will wanted not even a present reward.

Lastly. Though this work was agreeable to reason, yet it was far above the power of nature. I cannot ascribe either its rise or progress to myself; for it was what I sought not, I thought not

of; nay, I hated, and feared, and avoided, and shunned, and opposed it with all my might. I cannot ascribe it to any outward means. There are many parts of it which they did not reach: and as to the rest, the most forcible failed; the weakest wrought the effect. Neither strong nor weak had the same effect always. But the work was still carried on by a secret and undiscernible power, like the wind, blowing where it listeth. It bore the impress of God in all its steps. The word that awakened me, was the voice of "Him who maketh the dead to hear, and calleth the things which are not as though they were." The light that shone was the candle of the Lord, tracing an unsearchable heart through all its windings. It was all the work of One who is every where, who knoweth every thing, and who will not faint or be discouraged, till he hath brought forth judgment unto victory. And it was all an uniform work, though variously carried on through many interruptions, over many oppositions, for a long tract of time, by means seemingly weak, improper, contrary, suitable only for Him whose paths are in the great waters, and whose footsteps are not known. In a word, it was a bush burning and not consumed, only by the presence of God. It was a spark in the midst of the ocean, still kept alive, notwithstanding floods continually poured upon it. This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

1. I HAD now a design to go abroad; but on the advice of some friends, I laid aside that design, and engaged as Chaplain to a family: accordingly in August, 1696, I went to the Wemyss. When I came hither, a stranger, among persons of considerable quality, I was in a great strait, and cried to God for help. And though it was my own, more than his honour I was concerned for, yet He, who would not overlook even Ahab's humiliation, did not fail to assist me, so far as to maintain the respect due to the station I was in.

2. I had not been here long, when I was often engaged, and frequently without necessity, in debates about the divinity of the Scriptures, and the most important doctrines therein. This drew me to read the writings of Deists, that I might know the strength of the enemy. But I soon perceived that these foolish questions and contentions were unprofitable and vain. For evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. And to my sad

experience I found, that their word doth eat as doth a gangrene: so that happy is he that stops his ears against it!

3. The reading these was of dangerous consequence to one who was not rooted and grounded in the truth. Their objections I found struck at the foundations; they were many, new, and set off to the best advantage by the cunning craftiness of men practised in deceit. Nor was I acquainted with that vigilance and humble sobriety that was necessary for my defence against them. The adversary, finding all things thus prepared, set furiously upon me. He wrought up first the natural atheism, darkness, and enmity of my own heart, blasphemously to ask concerning the great truths of religion, "How can these things be?" To increase these doubts, he employed some who had all the advantages of nature and education, persons smooth, sober, of generous tempers, and good understandings, to oppose the truth with the most plausible appearances of argument and reason. To all this he added his own subtle suggestions, "Hath God indeed said so?" And sometimes he threw in fiery darts, to inflame and disorder me; especially when I was alone, or most seriously employed in prayer or meditation.

4. By all these ways he assaulted me, both as to the being of God, as to his providence, and as to the truth both of his revelation in general, and

of many particulars contained in it. Sometimes he suggested the want of sufficient evidence; at other times, that it was obscure or hard. Yea, some parts of it were accused as plain blasphemy; some as contradictory to each other. The great mystery of the Gospel was particularly set upon and represented as foolishness; and for fear of some or other of these suggestions, it was even a terror to me to look into the Bible.

5. The subtle enemy, who had so often before tempted me to pride, now pressed me to a bastard sort of humility. "How can such a one as you expect to remove difficulties, which so many abler men have sunk under?" By this I was brought into grievous perplexity. I sought relief from my own reasoning, from books, and even from prayer; but I found it not. Then I wished for some extraordinary revelation; and at last sat down with the sluggard, "folding my hands, and eating my own flesh." My own reasonings availed not against Him "who esteems iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood." All my books overlooked many of my scruples, and did not satisfy me as to the rest. And as to extraordinary expectations, God justly rejected them, seeing I would not hear Moses and the Prophets. So that I had quite sunk under the weight of my trouble, and been swallowed up of sorrow and despair, had it not been for some little assistances which the goodness of God gave me,

sometimes one way, sometimes another. When I was urged to reject the Scriptures, it was often seasonably suggested, "To whom shall I go? These are the words of eternal life." God powerfully convinced me, and kept the conviction strong upon my mind, that whenever I parted with revelation, I must give up all prospect of certainty or satisfaction about eternal life. The boasted demonstrations of a future happiness, built only on the light of nature, I had tried long ago, and found to be altogether weak and inconclusive; though had they been ever so conclusive, I had not been a whit the nearer satisfaction. For, to tell me of such a state, without an account of its nature, or the terms whereon it was attainable, was all one as if nothing had been said about it, and left my mind in equal confusion. Again: on a due observation of those who were truly religious, I could not but even then think them the better part of mankind; and my soul started at charging all the best of mankind with a lie, in a thing of the greatest importance. On the other hand: God opened my eyes to see the unaccountable folly of those who had abandoned revealed religion. The Scripture tells them plainly, they must do his will, if they would know whether the doctrine be of God. But they walk in a direct contradiction to his will: how then can they know of the doctrine? Nay, some sober, learned, and otherwise inquisitive persons

owned, that we are already miserable, if we are either cut off from the hopes of, or left at uncertainty about, a future state of happiness. They owned, likewise, themselves to be thus uncertain, and yet were at little or no pains to be satisfied: yea, I found they rather sought for what might strengthen their doubts, than remove them; which plainly showed a hatred of the light.

6. I received further help from considering the lives, but more especially the deaths, of the martyrs. When I considered the number, the quality, and all the circumstances of those who had been tortured, not accepting deliverance, I could not but own the finger of God, and the reality of religion. The known instances of its power over children, in their tender years, appeared likewise of great weight; and I began to get frequent touches of conviction, whereby, feeling the piercing virtue of his word making manifest the secrets of my heart, I was forced to own God to be in it of a truth. Lastly: I found a secret hope, begat and cherished I know not how, sometimes even amidst the violence of temptations, that as God had delivered others from temptations like mine, (although I doubted, if ever any had been so much molested as I,) so he would deliver me at length; that what I knew not now, I should know hereafter; that my mouth should yet be filled with his praise; and that Satan's rage showed his time was but short.

7. Hereby I was enabled, not only to persevere, and with more earnestness, both in public and private duties, but also carefully to conceal all my straits from others, who might have stumbled at or been hardened by them. I was unwilling others should know any thing that might disgust them at religion: "Tell it not in Gath, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph." In converse with such as were shaken, I still stood for the truth, as if I had been under no doubt about it. And I must own, that, while I did so, God often gave me both success with others, and satisfaction in my own mind. How good a Master is God! A word spoken for him is not lost; nor will he suffer the least service to be in vain. A heathen Cyrus, yea, Nebuchadnezzar himself, shall not work without his reward.

8. Before I proceed, I must observe the folly of reasoning with Satan: whenever I did so, he had still great advantage; he easily evaded all my arguments, and enforced his own suggestions; and even when they were not maintained by argument, he injected them so strongly, that I was not able to stand against them. Our safest course is to hold him at a distance, and avoid all communion with him. I must observe, likewise, the wise providence of God, that the greatest difficulties against religion are hid from atheists. None of the objections they make are near so subtle as those which were often suggested to me.

Indeed, they do not view religion near enough to see either the difficulties or the advantages that attend it. And the devil finding them quiet, keeps them so, not using force, where he can do his work without it. Besides, God, in his infinite wisdom, permits not all these subtleties of hell to be published, in tenderness to the faith of the weak, which could not bear so severe an assault.

9. I lay under many inconveniences all this while. Most of the converse I had was with unholy men. I had no friend to whom I could impart my griefs with freedom, or any prospect of satisfaction. And the entire concealing my concern made it fasten more and more, and drink up my blood and spirits. I laid aside my studies; I could not pursue either business or diversion; I had no heart to any thing; I could not read, unless now and then a small portion of Scripture, or some other practical book, except when, for a short space, there was an intermission of my trouble. For near a year and a half I read scarce any thing; and this slothful posture laid me open to fresh temptations, and made my corruptions grow stronger still.

10. Yet even now God minding his own work, by the means of his word, brought the law, in its spiritual meaning, nearer: and then I found more discernibly the stirrings of sin, which, taking occasion from the commandment, and being fretted at

the light let into my soul, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. Hereby I was plunged into deeper guilt; "my iniquities went over my head;" and my conscience was so alarmed, "that I found no rest in my bones, by reason of my sin."

11. I still laboured for rest, either by extenuating my faults, pleading the strength of temptation, (sometimes not without secret reflections upon God,) or by trying to persuade myself, they were no faults at all. When all these failed, I made new vows and resolutions; and Nov. 23, 1697, (a day I had set apart for fasting and prayer,) I drew up a short account of my treacherous dealing with God from my youth up, and solemnly bound myself to him for the time to come.

12. But though by this means I was kept from open pollutions; though I was careful of outward duties; received the word with joy; watched against pride of heart, unbelief, and other spiritual evils; though I fasted, prayed, mourned, and was much in secret; yea, strove against all sins, even those I loved best: yet all this was only a form of religion, the power of which I was still a stranger to: I was a stranger to that blessed relief of sinners, justification through the blood of Christ. Though I professed to believe it, I was really in the dark as to its glorious efficacy, tendency, and design. Still my eye was not single; I regarded only myself, and not the glory of God. It was still by some righteousness of my own, in whole

or in part, that I sought relief. Though I did part with my beloved sins, yet it was neither without reluctance, nor without some secret reserve. Lastly, my heart was utterly averse from all spiritual religion: and if I sometimes aimed at fixing my mind on heavenly things; yet it was soon weary of this forcible bent, and it seemed intolerable to think of being always spiritual.

13. I was now reduced to the last extremity. My sins were set in order before me, and had taken such hold upon me, that I was not able to look up. They were set in order in the dreadfulness of their nature and aggravations; my excuses baffled, and my mouth stopped before God. All the ways I had taken for my relief had deceived me: they were the staff of a broken reed; they pierced my arm, when I essayed to lean upon them; and "I was ashamed, and even confounded, that I had hoped." The wrath of God was likewise dropped into my soul, and "the poison of his arrows drank up my spirits." Add to this, that I was still unsatisfied about religion, and my enemies often told me, that even in God there was no succour for me. Yea, sometimes Satan, to entangle me the more, assaulted all the truths of religion at once; and then I was utterly confounded, when the Lord commanded that my enemies should close me in on every side.

14. By the extremity of this anguish, I was for some time, about the end of ninety-seven, and the

beginning of ninety-eight, dreadfully cast down. I was weary of my life. Oft did I use Job's words, "I loathe it, I would not live alway." And yet I was afraid to die. I had no rest: "my sore ran in the day, and in the night-time it ceased not." At night I wished for day, and in the day I wished for night. I said, "My couch shall comfort me; but then darkness was as the shadow of death." I was often on the brink of despair. "He filled me with bitterness, he made me drunk with wormwood. He removed my soul far from peace: I forgat prosperity. I said, My hope and my strength are perished from the Lord." I wondered that I was not consumed; and though I dreaded destruction from the Almighty, yet I must have justified him if he had destroyed me. Thus I walked about dejected, weary, and heavy laden; weary of my disease, and weary of my vain remedies; and utterly uncertain what to do next, or what course to take.

CHAPTER II.

1. It was in this extremity God stepped in: he found me wallowing in my blood, in a helpless and hopeless condition. I was quite overcome, neither able to fight nor fly, when the Lord passed by me, and made this time a time of love.

Towards the beginning of February, 1698, this seasonable relief came. I was then, as I remember, at secret prayer, when he discovered himself to me, when he let me see, that there are "forgivenesses with him, and mercy, and plenteous redemption. He made all his goodness to pass, and he proclaimed his name, the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin; who will be gracious to whom he will be gracious, and will show mercy to whom he will show mercy." This was a strange sight to one who before looked on God only as a consuming fire, which I could not see and live. He brought me from Sinai, and its thunderings, to Mount Zion, and to "the blood which speaketh better things than that of Abel." I now with wonder beheld Christ in his glory, "full of grace and truth." I saw that he who had before rejected all my offerings, was well pleased in the Beloved, being fully satisfied not only that there is forgiveness of sins, through the redemption which is in Jesus; but also, that God by this means might be "just in justifying even the ungodly that believe in him." How was I ravished with delight, to see that such mercy might consist even with his inflexible justice and spotless purity! And yet more, when he let me see, that to me, even to me, was the word of this salvation sent, that even I

was invited to "come, and take the water of life freely!" Farther: he discovered to me his design in the whole, even "that no flesh might glory in his sight;" that he might manifest the riches of his grace, and "be exalted in showing mercy." And when this strange discovery was made of a relief, which made full provision both for God's glory and my salvation, my soul was sweetly carried out to rest in it, as worthy of God, and every way suited to my necessity.

2. All these discoveries were conveyed to me by his word: not indeed by one particular passage, but by the concurring light of many of its testimonies and promises, seasonably set home, and plainly expressing those truths: thus I found it to be the power of God unto salvation. But neither was it his word alone: for the same passages I had read before and thought upon, without any relief; but now the Lord shined into my mind by them. Before this I knew the letter only, but now the words were spirit and life; a burning light by them shone into my mind, and gave me not merely some notional knowledge, but an experimental "knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." And vastly different this was from all the notions I had before had of the same truths. It shone from heaven: it was not a spark kindled by my own endeavours, but it shone suddenly about me: it came by a heavenly means, the word: it opened heaven, and discovered

heavenly things; and its whole tendency was heavenward. It was a true light, giving true manifestations of the one God, and the one Mediator between God and man, and a true view of my state with respect to God, not according to my foolish imaginations. It was a distinct and clear light, not only representing spiritual things, but manifesting them in their glory, and in their comely order. It set all things in their due line of subordination to God, and gave distinct views of their genuine tendency. It was a satisfying light: the soul absolutely rested upon the discoveries it made: it was assured of them; it could not doubt if it saw, or if the things were so as it represented them. It was a quickening, refreshing, healing light. It arose with healing in its wings. It was a powerful light; it dissipated that thick darkness which overspread my mind, and made all those frightful temptations, that before tormented me, instantly flee before it. Lastly, it was a composing light; it did not, like a flash of lightning, fill the soul with fear and amazement: but it quieted my mind, and gave me the full and free use of all my faculties. I need not give a large account of this light, for no words can give a notion of light to the blind: and he that has eyes, (at least, while he sees it,) will need no words to describe it. Proceed we, then, to its fruits, whereby the difference of it from all my former light will most evidently appear.

3. The first effect of it was an approbation of God's way of saving sinners by Jesus Christ; as a way of relief in all respects suitable to the needs of a poor, guilty, self-condemned, self-destroyed sinner, who is at length beat from all other reliefs, and hath his mouth entirely stopped before God. In this I rested, as a way full of peace and comfort, and providing abundantly for all those ends I desired to have secured. And this approbation discovered itself ever after in all temptations, by keeping up in me a settled persuasion, that "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is only in his Son." And, when afterwards I was under temptations, it still kept me firm in an absolute determination, utterly to reject all other ways of relief, whether I found present comfort in this or no. This was also my only sanctuary against guilt: "Let me be found in him, not having mine own righteousness." And, whenever God gave me a fresh beam of this light, all difficulties vanished away; then I rejoiced in Christ Jesus, and nothing was able to disturb me, while it lasted: and ever after I was then only pleased, when I found my soul, in some measure, moulded into a compliance with the design of the Gospel, emptied of myself, subjected to God, and careful to have him alone exalted.

4. A second effect of this discovery was, my eye began to be single, looking, in all things, to the glory of God. I now desired, that he alone (which

before, I had no real concern for) might be glorified in my life, or by my death. I saw that shame and confusion belonged to me, and to him only the whole glory of my salvation. I watched over the most secret actions of self, labouring to renounce it utterly, looking on it as my grand enemy, on which I was always to have an eye, and counting the power it still had my greatest affliction. I never found comfort, but when this idol was discernibly abased; and whenever this light shone, in proportion to its clearness and continuance, the interest of self was weakened in my soul, and I sought not myself but Christ Jesus.

5. A third effect of this light was with respect to his commandments, which I now saw were "not grievous, but right concerning all things." I owned his yoke to be easy, and his burden light. Amidst all temptations, I knew the law was holy, just, and good. I perceived, too, that it was exceeding broad, extending even to the lightest motion of the heart. The duties I was most averse from before were now easy, pleasant, and refreshing. I saw a peculiar beauty in those laws in particular, that crossed the sins which had the firmest rooting in my temper. None were so hateful to me; for none did I loathe myself so much; none was I so glad of a victory over. My mind was continually engaged in contrivances for their ruin, which formerly I still sought to spare. And would God have given me my choice, to

have the laws against them blotted out, he knows I should not have chosen it, and that I should have thought his law less pleasant and less perfect, had these prohibitions been wanting. I took pleasure in others, only so far as there appeared in them any thing of an humble, self-denying conformity to his law, and had a fixed dislike of the least inconformity thereto, either in myself or others. In a word, I saw that, if I could reach holiness, I should have pleasure, and peace, and liberty; that all wisdom's ways were ways of pleasantness; nor was any thing insupportable to me, but that remaining unsubdued corruption that would not stoop to put its neck under her yoke.

6. A fourth effect of it was, a right sorrow for sin, flowing from a deep sense of my ingratitude, to provoke such a God, who had prevented and still followed me with so much mercy. And this sorrow filled my heart with love to God, and his way, sweetened my soul, and endeared God to it. And the more God manifested his kindness, the more it increased; when he was pacified, I was ashamed and confounded; nor was it a burdensome, but a sweet and pleasant, sorrow, as being the exercise of filial gratitude. This sense of my unkindness, when kept within, covered me with blushes; and I was eased, when God allowed me to vent my sense of it, and to pour it, as it were, into his bosom. It was likewise a spring of activity in the way of duty; I was glad to be em-

ployed in the meanest work, which might show how deeply sensible I was of my former disobedience. It was not, as my late sorrow, pregnant with pride, stiffness, and unwillingness to suffer any chastisement; but it humbled, softened the soul, and made it willing to "bear the indignation of the Lord, since I had sinned against him." In a word, I was glad when God gave me my measure of it, and grieved when I found it wanting, and I cried to the Prince exalted for it, as a necessary help to the obeying his whole law.

7. A fifth effect of this light, was a comfortable hope of salvation, rising in strength, or growing more weak, as the discoveries of the way of salvation were more or less clear and strong. I knew I could not fail of salvation, otherwise than by missing this way. Sometimes I doubted of myself, but not of the way; so far as I walked in it, I was sweetly satisfied that my expectation should not be cut off. And as this light showed salvation in a way of self-denial, and trust only in the Lord, nothing so shook this hope, as the least appearance of self, or stirring of pride. As this sight of the glory of the Lord always filled me with shame, so the deeper my humiliation the stronger was my confidence. And so far was this assurance from begetting negligence, that it could not consist with it. To intermit or neglect duty, razed the foundation, or at least laid an insurmountable stop in the way of its progress.

PART III.

CHAPTER I.

1. This glorious discovery was very suprising. Oft I stood and wondered what this strange sight meant. The greatness of the things God had done surpassed belief; and yet the effects would not suffer me to doubt of them. Not that I distinctly observed them at the very first: the glory of the Lord was then so great, that for a time I fixed my eyes on that, and was less intent on the change which it wrought in me. Again: I was the less exact in observing them then, because of the darkness still remaining in me. I clearly saw the mystery of free justification through Christ, and peace by his blood; but I was still sadly ignorant of many of the most important things relating even to that mystery; as the daily application of that atonement, and the use of Christ with respect to sanctification. What therefore God did at this time I knew not now, but hereafter, when the Comforter had further instructed me into the Gospel, as my exigencies required; then, at length, I saw distinctly the work of God, and what he had done for me.

2. This discovery could not but be full of ravishing sweetness, considering the state wherein it found me. I was condemned by God and my own conscience, and under pressing fears of the present execution of the sentence. When the labours of the day required that I should sleep, and my body wasted with the disquiet of my mind, yet I was afraid to close my eyes, lest I should wake in hell, and durst not suffer myself to sleep, till I was beguiled into it I knew not how. Was it strange that the hopes of pardon were sweet to one in such a condition, whereby I lay down in safety and quiet rest, while there was none to make me afraid? A little before "the waters compassed me about even to the soul, the deep closed me round about, I went down to the bottoms of the mountains, and said, I am cast out of God's sight." Now, was it any wonder that such an one should rejoice, when brought into a garden of delights, and set down under the refreshing rays of the Sun of Righteousness? And the things he discovered to me here were not only altogether new, and such as I was utterly unacquainted with before, but also glorious in themselves. It was the glory of the Lord that shone round about me; and I saw such "things as eye hath not seen beside thee, O God." In a word, what I saw was (what the angels desired to look into) "the mystery of godliness," the wonders of God's law, and the "unsearchable riches of his mercy."

3. This discovery was of longer continuance, and far brighter, than any I have had since: it shone in its glory for ten days; nor was it quite gone for a long time after; and while it lasted, new discoveries were daily made. God carried me from one thing to another, and in this short space taught me more than I had learned by all my study in my whole life. Yea, he taught me the things I had learned before, in another and quite different manner. Every day he instructed me out of the Scriptures, talking and walking with me by the way, and opening them to me, which before were as a sealed book, wherein whatever I read was dark. Indeed, all this time my mind was almost wholly taken up about spiritual things; and whatever occurred in reading, meditation, converse, or daily observations, it (like a mould) cast into its own shape. All this while I was carried out to extraordinary diligence in duty. It was not, as formerly, a burden, but my heart was enlarged, so that I ran in the ways of God's ordinances and commandments. And herein my soul often made me like "the chariots of Amminadib," not easily to be stopped; sometimes to the disgust of those who did not taste the same ravishing sweetness which I enjoyed. But the life of all was, that God, by keeping his glory continually in my eye, kept me humbled and self-denied all this while: seeing him, I loathed myself. Beholding his glory, I was "in my own eyes as

a grashopper, as nothing, less than nothing, and vanity. I gloried only in the Lord, rejoiced in Christ Jesus, and had no confidence in the flesh."

4. God had many gracious designs in this. I was sore broken and wounded, and he did this in tenderness: he bound up my wounds, he poured in oil, he made me a bed in my sickness. He watched me, and kept me from disturbance, till I was somewhat strengthened. I had been plunged into grievous and hard thoughts of him, as if he had forgotten to be gracious. Nor was I easily induced to believe good tidings; yea, though it was told me, I could not believe, till I had a clear sight of the waggons and provisions, and then my spirit revived. God, in deep condescension, satisfied me that he was love, and had no pleasure in my death; and that the wound was not incurable, that it was not the wound of an enemy, or the stroke of a cruel one, but the wound of a friend, in order to healing. He was now to make me sell all for that goodly pearl; and that I might be satisfied with my purchase, he let me see both what I was to leave, and what I was to obtain. Again: he knew what a wilderness I was to go through, and therefore fed me before I entered into it. Lastly, he designed to give me something which might be a stay in all succeeding trials. And often since, when my soul has been in heaviness, have I been cheered by the remembrance of it.

5. But, alas! I understood not this. I fancied this world would last always. I talked of building tabernacles here, and knew not I was to come down from the mount, and that my Lord would depart from me again. I dreamed not of learning, or having occasion for war any more. I expected no more to fight with my corruptions, but thought the enemies which appeared not were dead, and that the "Egyptians were all drowned in the sea." Accordingly I projected to tie myself up to such a bent, and to stint myself to such a method of living, as neither our circumstances and temptations, nor our duty in this world allows of. I could not endure to read those books which were really necessary to be read, and all the time I spent in them seemed lost. Yea, I began to grudge the time which my body absolutely required for sleep, or other refreshments. Thus the devil secretly drove me from one extreme to the other, knowing well that I should not rest here, and that he could easily throw me back from this into the first, of assuming too great a latitude. I began likewise to reckon this enlargement of heart as my due, and as more mine own than it really was; and I looked on the stock I already had, as sufficient to carry me through all my difficulties; and saw not that the grace which was sufficient for me was yet in the Lord's hand.

6. But now God began to undeceive me. He gave me a thorn in the flesh to humble me, and a

messenger of Satan was sent to buffet me, who soon made me feel the fury of his temptations. Hereupon I fell into deep perplexity: I began to question the truth of former manifestations, to doubt of my own perseverance; yea, sometimes to quarrel secretly with God, as if he had beguiled me. I tried many ways to escape: I thought upon God: I complained to him: I sought for the causes of my affliction: I "essayed to shake myself, and go forth" to duty "as before;" but, alas! the Lord was departed from me; and the enemy, "which lay in my bosom, had discovered my secret, and shorn me of my strength."

7. Yet I could not but see, when I recovered myself a little after the violence of my conflict, that things were better with me now at my worst case, than formerly at my best. God frequently showed me something of his power and glory; he opened a scripture, and made my heart burn within me; or unfolded my case, and told me all that was in my heart; or let me see my desire upon my enemies. Sometimes he gave me access unto him, and made me come even to his seat, and pour out my heart before him. And when at the lowest, I was otherwise affected to Christ than before; my soul still longed after him; I essayed to stretch out the withered hand, and wished for the command, that would empower me to lay hold of him. I refused to go any where else, but resolved to wait upon him, and to trust in

him, even though he should slay me. And as to his law, though I could not run in it, my will was still toward it: I had no quarrel to it, but to myself: I breathed after conformity with it: I delighted therein after the inward man. And as to sin, though I was sometimes driven to it, this was just such a forced consent, as before I gave to the law. Though it prevailed, my heart was not with it as before: I found another sort of opposition to it; and if ever it gained a victory, I was the more enraged against it. Lastly, this coldness was now a preternatural state: I cried daily, "When wilt thou receive me?" I loathed myself for it; I could not rest in it; I wearied myself with essaying to break my prison; I looked back to former seasons, and said "O that it were with me as in months past!"

CHAPTER II.

1. FINDING my enemies had gained great advantage over me, by the security into which I was fallen, though I was unwilling to fight, yet upon their appearance I tried what weapons would be most successful. I objected to them, that now I was engaged to the Lord; I reasoned with them, I prayed against them. Nor could I then see whence it was that they prevailed; but God hath

since shown me several reasons of it. I laid too much stress on the grace I had already received; I was not sufficiently watchful; the enemy put me on vain work; where the sin lay not in the thing itself, but in the degree of it, there he set me upon renouncing it in the gross, and rooting out what was in itself lawful. Of this I had many instances with respect to my passions and worldly employments, and converse with sinful people. I still neglected some means of God's appointment, under pretence of difficulties and inconveniences, and so prevented his blessing upon the rest. I was sometimes not single in my aims; I wanted a victory which would ease me of the trouble of watchfulness. I was weary of a fighting life, and desired to conquer that I might be at rest. Lastly, when I was not quickly heard, I did not persevere in prayer "for grace to help in time of need."

2. Yet was God even then exceeding merciful to me: he kept me from giving quite over: when I had many times gone furthest into temptations, yet he came in with seasonable help; and frequently, when I was hard pressed, he so cleared up to me my own sincerity, as emboldened me to appeal to him, which left me at liberty, under this new encouragement, vigorously to oppose all my enemies.

3. And God has since let me see what gracious designs he carried on by these trials. Hereby he taught me, that all Christians must be soldiers;

that our security as to future temptations does not lie in grace already received, but in having our way open to the throne of grace; that God deals it out in the proper seasons, whereof he alone is able to judge; * that the covenant of grace doth not promise entire freedom from sins of infirmity, nor even from wilful sins, otherwise than in the constant as well as careful use of all the means which he hath appointed. Hereby too he let me see how displeased he was for my cleaving to sin so long. The sins that now frequently cast me down were those I sought to spare before. God cried often to me to part with them, and I would not hear; and now God would not hear when I cried against them. Hereby also he discovered the riches of that forgiveness that is with him, that it reaches sins of all sorts, multiplied relapses not excepted. He that requires us to forgive seventy times seven times a day, will not do less himself. And finally, he fitted me hereby to compassionate and comfort others also who were tempted.

4. During all this time, besides sins of infirmity, my corruptions did sometimes bear me down to relapses,* both into omissions of duties, and commissions of known sins. And these, being sins against light, love, and all sorts of engagements, lay heavy upon my conscience. I was much per-

* See the Preface.

plexed about them, my bones were broken, my spirit wounded exceedingly.

5. At some times, indeed, I was for a while "hardened by the deceitfulness of sin," and senseless; at other times my heart instantly smote me, and I was immediately after my fall stirred up to the exercise of repentance. But sooner or later God set my sins in order before me, either by some outward or inward affliction (often so remarkably chosen, that the sin was wrought upon the punishment) or by his word, or his Holy Spirit in his ordinances, which told me all that I had done.

6. Then was my soul troubled with fear and shame and a sense of his anger, by which Satan often sought to drive me to despair. But God graciously brake the force of this temptation, sometimes by distant discoveries of forgiveness; sometimes by reminding me of his former kindness, or showing me the fatal issue of casting away my confidence. And when the temptation was most violently urged, I thought it no time to dispute, but allowed the worst the tempter could suggest, and then laid my case in all its aggravations, to the extensive promises of the covenant. "Be it granted," said I, "that I am but an hypocrite; that I never obtained pardon; that I am the chief of sinners; that my sins have such aggravations as the sins of no other man ever had; yet the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, and he came to save the chief of sinners."

7. When I had got thus far, I got up again as I could, and sought him in all the duties of his appointment. Nor was it long (if I humbly and patiently continued in this way) before I found him, as at the first. He set my sin, in all its aggravations, before me; he led me up to original sin, the source of all; he cut off all excuses, and left me self-convicted, owning that any punishment on this side hell would be mercy. Then he stepped in, and made a gracious discovery of "the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness." He drew my soul to close with, and with trembling to lay stress upon it. Having by this look drawn my eyes to look at him again, while I looked, my soul melted into tears; my heart, before bound up, was loosed; and my lips, before closed, were opened. While he thus answered me, and I could scarce believe the news, "he created peace by the fruit of his lips," and as it were forced it upon my soul, and "shed abroad his love in my heart."

8. Before I conclude this head, I must observe, (1.) That sometimes this work was wrought gradually; sometimes all at once, and in a moment. (2.) Sometimes I sought peace long before I obtained it; sometimes God surprised me immediately upon my sin, before I had thought in the least what I had done, and gave me such a look as made me weep bitterly. And when it was thus, it pierced through my soul, filling me with the deepest loathing of myself,

and the highest wonder at the riches, freedom, and astonishing sovereignty of his grace.

9. There was a great difference as to the continuance of these impressions, and likewise as to the degrees of them. At some times, my convictions and humiliations were deeper, and my faith and hope far clearer, than at others. But amidst all these accidental differences, the substance of the work was always the same. I would observe, lastly, that the most terrible enemies are not the most dangerous. While I was attacked by plain sins, I was easily convinced and alarmed at them, which was attended with all these happy effects; whereas I have been since assaulted by less discernible evils, sins under the mask of duties; and these secretly devour the strength, and are difficultly discovered in their exceeding sinfulness.

I must not pass over without notice, that when I first felt forgiveness of sins, I was much exercised with, and troubled for, sins of infirmity and daily incursion. Of this I shall give a more distinct account. (1.) When God manifested himself, his enemies fled before him; they received a stunning stroke, and vanished away at the brightness of his appearing. He for a time bore down corruption, chained up Satan, and kept me from any the least disturbance from them. (2.) It was some time before my stronger enemies appeared again; presumptuous sins did not soon

approach me: I first found the remaining power of sin only by the invasion of sins of daily infirmity, particularly deadness in prayer. (3.) Hereupon I began to be much discouraged, neither understanding my present state, nor the provision made for the cause in the covenant of grace, by a daily application of the blood of atonement. (4.) When my fond expectation was disappointed, I at first essayed to humble myself distinctly for each of these transgressions. But finding my whole time would not suffice for this, I was obliged to go with them all at once, and plunge into the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. I took a view of myself defiled by innumerable evils, and under a sense of them cast myself on the glorious atonement, and relied for the cleansing me from them all on that blood which cleanseth from all sin. (5.) To clear this matter yet further, I observe, that the light which first discovered this plenteous redemption, though variously clouded, yet was never quite lost. A child of light is never in utter darkness. He has, indeed, a summer's sun, that shines longer, brighter, and warmer; and his winter's sun, which shines more faintly. He has fair and rainy days: he has a changeable intercourse of day and night; but light more or less there is still.

10. Upon the whole, we may remark, (1.) That we may heal our wounds slightly; but it is

God's prerogative to speak solid peace. (2.) That considering our unbelief, and pride of heart, it is not easy to win a sinner to believe, that the forgiveness which is with God is able to answer all his necessities. And when the soul is in some measure satisfied with this, and willing to come to God daily for grace and mercy, it is not easy to keep up either a due abhorrence of sin, or a due sense of that boundless mercy. Yea, here lies one of the greatest secrets of practical godliness, and the highest attainment in close walking with God, to come daily and wash, and yet retain as high a value for this discovery of forgiveness as if it were only to be had once and no more. The more we see of it, the more doubtless we ought to value it; whereas, on the contrary, unless the utmost care be used, our hearts turn formal, and count it a common thing. I observe, (3.) That the joy of the Lord is then only to be retained, when we walk tenderly and circumspectly; being inconsistent not only with any gross sin, but with any remissness of behaviour. And, lastly, that when I was at the lowest ebb, I have often recovered myself by thankfulness. If you ask, what I had then to be thankful for; I answer, I began thus: "What a mercy is it, I am out of hell! Blessed be the Lord for this." Again: "What a mercy is it, that he hath given me to see, and thank him for, that mercy! Blessed be the Lord for this likewise." And thus I have gone on, till he hath

led me to a sense of his love, and restored comfort to my soul.

CHAPTER III.

1. I BEFORE mentioned the trials I had about the being of a God, almost as soon as I had any concern about religion. But at first I had no argument urged against it; only, seeing this was the hinge on which all religion turned, I found myself at a loss for evidence so clear, and strong, and convincing as I thought necessary, with respect to a truth whereon so much weight was to be laid. I said, "Very great things are demanded of me, and I am called to hope for great things; but before I trust so far, I would know more of that God in whom I am to trust."

2. But afterwards, when I was more estranged from God, and intent upon abstract subtleties, the devil took his opportunity, and said daily, "Where is now thy God?" He then triumphed, "Where is now that mouth with which thou hast so often reproached atheists? These are the arguments they have: come forth then, try thy strength, and fight them."

3. Hereupon a sharp conflict began, in which I used various ways. Sometimes I rejected his suggestions, and refused them a hearing. Some-

times I tried to answer his arguments; but the longer I stood arguing the case, I was always at the greater loss. Then I would wish for a discovery of God himself: O that I knew where I might find him! Whence the enemy failed not to infer, "If there was a God, he would help one who was thus standing up for him, in such a strait." Sometimes I prayed; and though Satan urged me with the unreasonableness of praying till I was sure there was a God, yet I always thought, "If there be one, he can best satisfy me as to his own being."

4. And he did satisfy me in part, (1.) By clear discoveries of the tendency of these temptations, namely, to cast reproach on all the best and wisest of men, and to destroy the foundations of all human happiness. (2.) By some glimpses of his glory, even in the works of creation. (3.) By some beams of light from his word; and more than once in particular, by suggesting to my mind, with power, that answer of the three children: "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand. But if not, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy god, nor worship the golden image thou hast set up."

5. But yet I was not fully relieved: nothing but a discovery of God could give a full defeat to Satan.

But considering then I was an unhumbled enemy, God could not have appeared otherwise than as an enemy; and this my nature could not bear. I could not have thus seen his face and lived. Wherefore he led me another way: he discovered sin to me first, and hereby broke the force of the temptation; and having humbled me, he then discovered himself in his glory in Christ Jesus.

6. This it was which gave me full satisfaction: while God commanded this light to shine on my mind, I could not desire a clearer proof of his being: all his enemies fled before it; all the mountains of opposition shook at the presence of the Lord, and were carried into the midst of the sea. I had now manifold evidences of this glorious truth. I had, (1.) The evidence of sight: by the eye of faith I saw the glory of God as represented in the word, shining with the clearest lustre: it not only convinced me of its own reality, but that, in a manner, nothing else was real. This sight gave me more consistent, becoming notions of God, his nature, and attributes, than ever I attained before; and so shook the very foundations of those doubts which flowed purely from my ignorance of his nature. (2.) I had the evidence of the ear: I heard him speak, and his voice sufficiently distinguished itself from the voice of any creature. He first spoke terror to me from Sinai; and when my soul was as the troubled sea, he said unto it, "Peace, be still;

and there was a great calm." His words had light and power peculiar to God with them, both when he spoke for me and against me: they made me taste and see that the Lord is good, and that "blessed is he that trusteth in him." All my objections were solved. As to the seeming inconsistency of his attributes, at the time he condescended to show me his back parts, he satisfied me, "that no man can behold his face." He gave me a view of his incomprehensibility, which silenced all those suggestions. And as to the seeming disorders in his government, a plain answer was, "He giveth account to none: his way is in the sea; his paths in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known."

CHAPTER IV.

1. This temptation, as observed before, did not attack me so soon as the former; but it was managed in much the same way. Sometimes my mind only hung in suspense, for want of sufficient evidence. Sometimes I was strangely harassed with multiplied objections, either by the books I read, the enemies of the word with whom I conversed, or by Satan, whose suggestions were far the most subtle and most perplexing of all.

2. This trial was more grievous than even the former. These objections were equally destructive of all religion, and were far more numerous, more plausible, and entertained by persons of a fairer character. Besides, the evidence of this truth lay farther from the reach of an enlightened mind.

3. I tried many ways to escape. Besides prayer and attending public ordinances, I read many books written in defence of the Scriptures. And this wanted not its use: I got a rational conviction of the truth, and so was emboldened to plead for it against its enemies; and I found answers to many particular objections, which encouraged me to wait for full satisfaction. But that I found not yet: this being but the wisdom of men, had not power to silence temptations, to enlighten me to see the evidence of God in his word, or to give a relish for it to an indisposed soul.

4. God began to break the force of this temptation, when his word fastened a sense of guilt on my soul; though this rather extorted an assent, than induced to a cheerful acquiescence therein, as coming from God. But when he gave me that light which repelled all temptations, which revived and comforted a soul bowed down before, I instantly closed with his word as the word of life; I rejoiced as one that had found a hid treasure; I was sweetly satisfied that it came from him, and that by many evidences: for,

(1.) All discoveries of guilt were made by it. God by this spoke in my ear, sins which none save he who searcheth the heart could know, which I knew not, nor any creature else. By it the secrets of my heart were manifest, so that I was compelled to own, that God was in it of a truth. I could not but cry out, "Come, see a book which told me all that ever I did. Is not this the book of God?"

(2.) All the discoveries he made of his anger were made by the holy Scriptures. It was by them that his wrath was dropped into my soul, and revealed from heaven against me. It was by the same, that he let in upon my soul the glorious discovery of his being, attributes, and his whole will concerning my salvation by Jesus Christ. By the same, he conveyed all those quickening, converting, transforming, supporting, composing influences, and let me see the other "wonders of his law, excellent things in counsel of knowledge." By this he was pleased to reveal the craft, the power, the actings, and the designs of my enemies; his own designs in my trials, and something of his secret designs in many of his public administrations.

(3.) As all these influences and discoveries were conveyed by his word, so by the peculiar light and power that attended them he evidenced that his name was there. It taught, not as the greatest, the wisest, the best of men; but with another sort

of authority and weight; it spake as never man spake. Whatever it said, my conscience stood to. When it challenged me for what I knew not to be faults, no defences availed: I was no sooner accused, than arraigned, convicted, condemned. In like manner, when God hereby spoke peace, he created it. The dead heard, and the hearer lived. Temptations after it spoke not again. When I was self-destroyed, self-condemned, and cast hereby into the greatest agony; yet whenever he sent his word, it healed me: my soul was commanded to be at peace, and there ensued a glorious calm.

5. And whereas my enemies had often asked me, how I could distinguish the real among so many pretended revelations; God himself now gave me a reply: "The Prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not my word like as a fire; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jer. xxiii. 28, 29.) And he was pleased particularly to speak those things, whereat I had stumbled, to my soul; which both humbled me for my former unbelief, and encouraged me to hope that I should know other things hereafter which I understood not now. Again: he satisfied me as to many things, that the time of knowing them was not yet; and that when he saw the proper season to be come, he

would show me plainly of them. He let me see his wisdom and goodness in thus training me up to dependence for learning of him what I knew not; and showed me that it was my duty to meditate in his law day and night, and to search the Scriptures with all humility; since "the secret of the Lord is only with those that fear him, and he will show none but them his covenant."

6. When after this I read the Scriptures, and found not that powerful light shining with that warming, quickening, dazzling glory, yet I found an habitual light in my soul, whereby I could almost every where discern part of the glory of the Lord; and by this I was overawed, and brought still to regard them as the word of God. A light was still reflected on the whole Scripture; and I was ordinarily enabled to perceive how worthy of him, and like himself, every thing was which I read there. And by this abiding light I was capable of discerning therein discoveries of the actings of sin and grace, with a penetration and exactness beyond the reach of any, save the omniscient and only wise God.

CHAPTER V.

1. I BEFORE showed that when I was in doubt about the holy Scriptures, the devil often sug-

gested to me, "How can you expect satisfaction in these things, when men of so much greater abilities have sought it in vain?" And this suggestion was often so violently urged, that I had no spirit left in me.

2. But when God discovered himself to me in his own light, the force of this temptation was utterly broken; though I had not a particular sight of the weakness of it, till I read (some time after) the three first chapters of the first epistle to the Corinthians. The substance of what God then showed me was,

(1.) That his great design in the method of salvation he had chosen, was to stain the pride of all human glory, "that no flesh might glory in his sight, but he that glorieth might glory in the Lord." (2.) That a vain ambition to be wise above what God allowed, was the spring and chief part of our apostasy from God; and still "vain man would be wise; the Jews ask a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom." (3.) That in order to the attainment of the foregoing design, and to the recovery of man from his apostasy, it was plainly necessary that this ambition, being a flat opposition to his design, and a principal part of his corruption, should be removed. It was requisite, that God should "destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nought the understanding of the prudent." (4.) God, to vindicate his own wisdom reproached by this vain ambition of man, to fix

an eternal blot on human wisdom, and to discover his holy severity in punishing this ambition, with the other wickednesses of vain man, "suffered," for many ages, "all nations to walk in their own ways," and to try whether they were better than God's ways, whether they could supply the defects which they fondly imagined God had made them with, or relieve themselves from the misery of their apostasy. And the event answered the design of his wisdom and justice, and the desert of those who made the attempt. For after the fruitless endeavours of four thousand years, "the world by wisdom knew not God." They missed the mark: "their foolish hearts were darkened; seeking to be wise, they became fools;" instead of getting their eyes opened to see more than God allowed, they could see nothing but their own nakedness; and so imperfect were the discoveries even of that, that they imagined fig-leaves would cover it. (5.) After they had spent the time allotted for showing the vanity of their own wisdom, God, in the depth of his compassion, stepped in to their relief; and in order thereto, was pleased to pitch upon a way quite opposite to all the wisdom of foolish man. He chose not "the enticing words of man's wisdom," or eloquence; it was not suitable to the truth of God, to use that mean art, whereby the judgments of men are led blindfold in subjection to their passions. He made no choice of artificial reasonings, the other eye of

human wisdom. It did not become the majesty of God to dispute men into a compliance with his will. And although he wrought signs to awaken the attention of a drowsy world, to gain respect to his ambassadors, to strengthen the faith of weak believers, and to cut off every plea from unbelief; yet he chose them not chiefly to convert and recover the world, being unwilling so to derogate from his word, as if the word of God were not, upon its own evidence, worthy the acceptation of all rational creatures. (6.) God having rejected all these, made use of "the foolishness of preaching;" that is, a plain declaration of his will in his name, "in the demonstration of the Spirit and power" by men commissioned by him for that purpose. Now this was a means every way worthy of God. Man had believed the devil rather than God; the devil seemed to have gained a great advantage, by persuading man in his integrity to credit him, and discredit God. God now cast back the shame on him, by engaging fallen man to renounce the devil, and upon his bare word give up Satan and all that adhered to him. And further to manifest his design, as he made use of the foolishness of preaching, so he chose for his ambassadors, not the learned disputers of the world, but foolish, weak, illiterate men, that by things which in appearance "are not, he might bring to nought those that are." Lastly, to lay man lower yet, that "the Lord alone might be exalted," he chose not for his peo-

ple such as the world would have thought stood fairest for mercy; but he chose, for the general, the most miserable and contemptible of mankind: "not many wise, not many noble, not many mighty, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise."

3. Hence God showed me, that it was to be expected, and was indeed inevitable, that a great opposition should be every where made to his Gospel; that this opposition would principally be by pretenders to wisdom, and learned men; that their objections must be against all the concernments of the Gospel, the matter, manner, means of it, all being opposite to their expectations; and that therefore it was no wonder to see some stumble at the cross, some at the preaching, some at the Preachers; that it was to be expected their objections would be specious, as being suited to the wisdom of men, the natural apprehension of all who were not brought to a compliance with the grand design of God. Lastly: that it was impossible for any man, who was not brought to be a fool in his own eyes, to be wise in the things of God, or to discern and approve of the conduct of God in this whole matter.

4. Upon this discovery I was fully satisfied, that the opposition of learned men, and their unsuccessfulness in their inquiries, was so far from being just prejudice to, that it was a strong confirmation of, the truths of religion; and, on the other hand,

that though they were, in the wisdom of God, hid from the wise and prudent, yet babes might have a clear discovery thereof, because it had pleased the Father to reveal these things to them.

5. Another common objection, which had made at some times a considerable impression upon my mind, was, that the Scriptures are contrary to reason. I shall just point at the springs of my relief.

First: I was long before fixed in a deep, rational conviction of the shortness of human knowledge, and that there was no truth which we receive, whether upon the evidence of metaphysical, mathematical, or moral principles, or even on the evidence of our senses, against which there lay not insoluble objections. Yet no man questioned these truths; nor, though we endeavoured it ever so much, could we doubt of many of them. And as this was one of the most considerable fruits of my studies in philosophy, so it was of use to me many ways: it made me see through the vanity of that pretence against the truths revealed by God, that there lie unanswerable objections against them. This I plainly saw ought not to shake my assent, if I found sufficient evidence for them; especially as I was convinced, it was reasonable to expect more inextricable difficulties about truths supernaturally revealed than others, since they lie farther out of our reach. Therefore, when any such occurred, I was rather led to suspect my own ignorance than the truths of God.

Secondly: God had before fixed in me the faith of his incomprehensibility, and fully convinced me that I could not know him to perfection; he let me see that "his ways are not as our ways," so that I durst not any more attempt to measure him, or his ways, by my short line, but in all things I rested in the resolution of his word. "To the law and to the testimony" I brought all; and where that clearly interposed, my soul was now taught fully to acquiesce in, and stand to, its determination.

Thirdly: When the enemy strongly attacked any particular truth, and I could not instantly solve his objections, I was much relieved by a view of the multiplied testimonies of the word, all running the same way. And when by consulting interpreters, especially critics, I was darkened rather than cleared, I had recourse to the scope of the words, and the plain meaning that first occurred, with an humble dependence on God for his light.

Fourthly: If for a time, by the subtle perversion of some scriptures, I could not find the true meaning of them, the analogy of faith stayed my mind, till I could recover those particular passages out of the enemy's hand: when God manifested himself to me, he gave me a view of his whole design in the revelation he had made of himself, and of the harmonious consent and concurrence of all the doctrines of the Gospel, in promoting that design. He showed me likewise, how the end and the

means were so closely linked together, that one of these truths could not be overturned but all the rest would follow. Whenever therefore any of them was controverted, its connexion with the other truths, uniformly and plainly attested by the current of Scripture, presented itself; and my mind was satisfied this could not fall without they all fell together. This I take to be the analogy of faith, and herein I often took sanctuary.

6. I before mentioned what a continual bondage I was long in, through fear of death. I shall now give some account of my relief from this also.

First: The Lord's mercy manifested in Christ freed me from this spirit of bondage, and gave me a taste of the liberty of the sons of God. He in great measure removed the grounds whereon I most feared it, viz., sin the sting of death, and want of evidence about the reality of divine things.

Secondly: Whereas there still continued some fear upon a near prospect of it, I was much relieved by God's promise, that we should "not be tempted above what we were able to bear," especially when I recollected my former experience. I remember one day in particular, I was oppressed with the fear of death, when God mercifully suggested to me, "Hast thou not shrunk under the remote prospect of other trials, and yet been carried through them? Why shouldest thou distrust him as to future trials, who hath so often helped thee in time of need?" I then considered, it is no way

proper that God should give his grace before our trial comes; but rather that he should keep us humble and dependent, by reserving it in his own hand, and teach us to submit to his wisdom, as to the measure and time of performing his own promises. And I have ever since rested in this faith, that "the Lord is a God of judgment," and that "blessed are all they who wait on him;" not doubting either his faithfulness as to the accomplishment of his promises, or judgment as to the right timing and measuring them, in proportion to our necessities. Hereupon I rest to this day: I dare not say, "I am ready to die;" I dare not say, "I have faith or grace sufficient to carry me through death;" I dare not say, "I have no fear of death;" but this I say, "There is sufficient grace laid up for me in the promise; there is a throne of grace to have recourse to; and there is a God of judgment, who will not withhold it, when it is really the time of need."

PART IV.

CHAPTER I.

1. When I was under the violent strugglings before mentioned, I had laid aside all thoughts of the ministry; for I could not entertain a thought of preaching to others what I did not believe myself. But now the scene being changed, I was, after long deliberation and fervent prayer, determined to comply with my mother's desire, (who had devoted me from my childhood to this work,) with the advice of my most pious friends, the importunity of many others, and the motions of my own heart. For I had a lively sense of the strong obligation laid upon me, to lay out myself in the service of my good Master; and I thought the nearer my employment related to him, the happier it would be.

2. Accordingly, on May 1st, 1700, I entered into holy orders, and, May 5th, began my ministry at Ceres.

From this time, he prepared his sermons with much secret prayer, for a blessing thereon both to himself and his hearers. His practice also was,

exactly to review and remark his behaviour in public duties; what assistance and enlargement of heart he obtained, and what concerns for the souls of his hearers. When he fell short, it was matter of humiliation to him; when he was assisted, of greater gratitude and watchfulness.

3. Knowing he was to watch over souls as one that must give account, he had the weight of this charge much upon his spirit: he therefore laboured to know the state of the souls of his flock, that he might be able to guide them according to their particular cases. In order thereto, he was diligent in visiting all the families within his parish, instructing his people by catechising, and in marking their proficiency in the knowledge of the Gospel. Especially before administering the Lord's supper, he conversed severally with those who desired to partake thereof, to try what sense they had of real religion; what influence the word of God had had upon them, and what fruits of it were in their hearts and lives, that he might deal with their consciences accordingly.

4. Take an instance of this in his own words. July 8th, 1703. "I have now spent about a month in converse with my people, and I observe the few following things:"—

First: "That of three or four hundred persons there were not above forty who had not at one time or other been more or less awakened, though with far the greater part it came to no length.

Whence it is plain that God leaves not himself without witness, even in the bosom of his enemies, but sooner or later so far touches the hearts of all men, as will dreadfully enhance the guilt of those who put out the light, and quench his Spirit."

Secondly: "That some of those, whom it has pleased God to awaken by my ministry, promise more than flowers, even fruit; and that most acknowledge, that the word comes nearer them daily, which makes me ashamed of my own negligence, and astonished at the goodness of God, who blesses my weak labours notwithstanding."

Thirdly: "That though God may make use of the words of man, in letting us into the meaning of the Scriptures, yet it is ordinarily the very Scripture word, whereby he conveys any comfort or advantage."

5. Hearing about this time of some, who were much swayed by good people, in dark steps of their ministerial work, I was satisfied in the evident clearness of the following rules.

First: That it is very dangerous to lay much stress on the apprehensions of the best of people, as to what may be sin or duty in things that belong not to their station; for the promise of the Spirit's teachings belongs not to them, as to what may concern a Minister's station. Therefore, it is safer to desire their prayers, that God would, according to his promise, discover to us what is our duty, than to learn them to step out of their

stations, and advise in things that belong not to them.

Secondly: In consulting others for light, great regard should be had to the different talents of men. In matters of soul-exercise, most regard should be had to those whom God has fitted with endowment that way. In matters of government, most regard should be had to those whom he has fitted that way.

Thirdly: The holiest men are most likely to know God's mind; but to know who are the holiest, we must consider, not only what men's behaviour, but what their temptations, are: for one, in whom less appears, may indeed have more grace than another, who seems to have more; when the one is continually plunged in floods of temptation, and the other is free from them.

Observe, fourthly, that Ministers are commonly more shaken about the truths of religion than about their own state; but the people, more about their own state than about the truths of religion. And as Ministers are assisted to clear the people, as to what they are straitened about; so are the people often enabled to help their Ministers, as to what occasions their uneasiness. Thus they mutually excel and are excelled, to humble both, and keep both in their stations.

As to clearing up our duty in doubtful cases, observe, lastly, that there is ever a bias to one way or the other; that we must seek to have this removed, and cry to God to bring our hearts to

an equal willingness to take either or neither way; that when this is attained, we must use our best reason, and take the way that appears most proper; though still crying to him, that he would put a stop to us, if we be out of the road. If he afford light in any other particular way, we must use it, still taking care to seek light soberly, to use it tenderly, and to be wary in the application of it.

6. July 2d, 1702.—God about this time giving me somewhat of a revival from a long deadness, I think myself concerned to take notice of the means by which I obtained this benefit. And (1.) It was signally promoted by converse with zealous Christians. I found, that as "iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend." (2.) By some heavy strokes laid upon me. (3.) By terrible providences to the public. (4.) By some papers seasonably brought to my hands, containing the exercise of some real Christians, wherein I saw how far short I was of them, and also not a few of the causes of my sadly withered and decayed state. (5.) By some discovery of the vanity of my sweetest enjoyments. And, lastly, by God's leading me to some subjects, which I chose for others, but wherein I found my own case remarkably touched.

7. March 12th, 1705.—I was far out of order. "Lord, pity and shine upon me." At night, I was somewhat refreshed in family worship. In

meditation hereon, I saw unbelief was the root of all my misery. I was broken on account of it; I cried to God for relief, "O manifest thyself to my soul!" I was much grieved, that, at a time when so many strange evils abound, there should be so strange a stupidity on my spirit, that I could not mourn for the dishonour done to God. I cried for a spirit of supplication and repentance.

8. April 17th, 1705.—I was much disordered in body; but about seven at night I was a little relieved. Yet bowing my knees to prayer, I was full of perplexity; the Lord hid himself, and my spirit was overwhelmed; but meeting with that scripture, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;" I found my mind composed. But O that it were with me as in months past!

9. Feb. 24th, 1706.—Being the Lord's day, I was sore shaken in the morning about the truths of God, but came to peace as to what I was to preach, in three things. "Lord, thou hast fully satisfied me," that, (1.) All other courses to satisfaction in our great concern, besides that of the Gospel, are utterly vain and unsatisfactory. (2.) That, supposing the truth of the Gospel, there is a plenary security, as to all I can desire in time or in eternity. And, (3.) That it can be only the wretched unbelief of my heart, that makes me

ever hesitate concerning the truth of it, seeing I have full evidence for it, far beyond what in other things would absolutely cut off all hesitation. I will look then for faith to the author of it: Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief! Thou hast so fixed me in the belief of these three truths, that no temptation hath been able to shake me.

10. In the spring, 1707, some of the followers of Mrs. Bourignon coming into his parish, he laboured to guard his people against the infection of their specious errors; a short account whereof he gives in the following words:—

April 20th, 1707.—This day the Lord directed me to strike at the root of the prevailing delusion, in opposition to which I taught,

First: That true holiness will not admit of leaving out some duties; whereas these devotees, while they withdraw from the world, omit the unquestionable duties both of general usefulness among men, and of diligence in their particular callings.

Secondly: That holiness consists not in a strict observation of rules of our own invention, such as most of theirs are.

Thirdly: That whatever holiness those profess who neglect the ordinances of God, none can reasonably conclude, that they are in any thing influenced by the authority of the Lord Jesus; for the same authority binds to the one as well as the other.

Lastly: That the most effectual inducement to universal obedience, is a sense that our sins are forgiven us, still kept fresh upon our souls, and a constant improvement of the blood of Christ by faith.

11. Jan. 11th, 1708.—In the morning I arose greatly indisposed in my body. Before church I was somewhat relieved, but immediately after sermon seized with vomiting. Lord, lead me to some suitable improvement.

Jan. 12th was a day I set apart for examining the state of my soul; chiefly on these heads. (1.) Are daily sins, and sins of infirmity, searched, observed, weighed, mourned for? And do I exercise faith distinctly, in order to the pardon of them? (2.) Does the impression of the necessity and excellency of Christ's blood decay? Are the experiences of its use and efficacy distinct as before? (3.) Am I formal in worship? in secret, family, public prayer? desiring blessing on meat, returning thanks? meditation and reading? (4.) Is there due concern for the flock? singleness and diligence in ministerial duties? prayers for them? &c. (5.) Is there sympathy with afflicted saints and churches? (6.) Is the voice of the rod heard, calling to deniedness to relations, even the dearest? deniedness to the world, to life? preparation for death? spirituality in duty?

12. October 12th, 1709.—Being seized with a

violent flux and griping, yet God kept me submissive, without repining; and brought me to commit the disposal of all to him, crying for a removal of any aversion to his will. And as to my ministry, though I felt much remorse for the want of wrestling with God, for the success of his word among the people, yet it was refreshing that I durst say in the sight of God, that I was really concerned to know the truth; that I kept back none which might be profitable for them; that I preached what I resolved to venture my soul on, and that I desired to preach home to their consciences.

CHAPTER II.

1. When God convinced me, that it was not meet I should be alone, he also clearly convinced me, that "a prudent wife is from the Lord." I looked therefore and cried to, and waited on him for direction, with that eminent freedom and preparation of heart which gave a fixed hope he would incline his ear, and bless me in my choice.

2. The command, "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers," was so strongly impressed on my soul, that no prospect of outward advantage could have swayed me to choose one void of the fear of

God. But whether to choose on the testimony of others, or from personal acquaintance, I could not easily determine.

3. At last inclining to think a personal acquaintance necessary, I pitched on one who appeared suitable to me; and who falling at that time under some unusual concern about religion, which she imparted to me, it looked like a providential clearing of the way; on which I too hastily proceeded in the proposal: yet I never durst pray absolutely for success, but had great freedom in praying that God would direct; and that if it were not for my good, my way might be hedged in, and my design effectually disappointed. Meanwhile she carried on an intrigue with another, to whom she was soon after clandestinely married.

4. Another marriage was proposed to me some time after. In the beginning of this affair, March, 1700, I was confident to meet with a disappointment; whereon I resolved to quit it, and did so for some time. But God, by one means or other, broke all my designs of turning away. He visibly interposed his providence, gave me fresh opportunities, directed me to means I had never before thought of, and reconciled those to it from whom I expected the strongest opposition.

5. Yet after I had the greatest encouragement to proceed, I met with discouragements again. This was followed by new encouragement when I least expected it: and by this variety of success, I

was kept low as to my thoughts of myself, and wholly dependent on God for the event.

6. Dec. 13th.—This forenoon I set apart for prayer: and being to address God with regard to my proposal of marriage, I began the work with an inquiry into my own state. Upon this inquiry, I found,

First: With respect to God, I was under a full conviction, that life was in his favour; nay, that his loving-kindness is better than life itself: that any interest in his favour is utterly impossible without respect had to a Mediator; God being holy, I unholy; God a consuming fire, I a sinner meet to be consumed: that God out of mere love has been pleased to send into the world Jesus Christ, as the Mediator through whom sinners might regain his favour.

Secondly: With respect to Christ, nothing has been able (since it was first given me) to shake my full conviction of the following particulars:—that Jesus Christ is such a Saviour as it became the goodness, justice, wisdom, and power of God to provide; and such as became the desires and needs of sinners, as being sufficient "to save all that come to God through him, and that to the uttermost, his blood being able to cleanse from all sin, his power to subdue all things to himself, and his Spirit to lead into all truth:" that I need him in all his offices; there being no time when I durst once think of parting them: God knows

that my heart is as much reconciled to his kingly as to his priestly office, and that it would for ever damp me, had he not a power to captivate "every thought to the obedience" of himself; that all my hope of freedom from that darkness which is my burden is from Christ's prophetical office; and my hope of freedom from the guilt and power of sin arises from his priestly and kingly offices. In one word, I have no hope of any mercy in time or eternity, but through him. It is through him I expect all, from the least drop of water to the immense riches of his glory.

Thirdly: With respect to his law, notwithstanding my frequent breaches of it, I dare take God to witness, that I count all his commandments concerning all things to be holy, and just, and good; insomuch that I would not desire any alteration in any, and least of all in those which most cross my inclinations: that I desire inward, universal conformity to them all, and that in the spiritual meaning and extent, as reaching all thoughts, words, and actions, and even the minutest circumstances of them.

Lastly: That since the commencement of this affair particularly, I have seen a peculiar beauty in the law, as exemplified in the life of our Lord; more especially in his absolute submission to the divine will, even in those things which were most contrary to his innocent nature. And though I could scarce reach this submission at some times,

yet I earnestly desired it. I looked upon it as exceedingly amiable, and condemned myself so far as I came short of it.

7. As to the whole, my spirit was in a calm and composed frame: but, contrary to my positive resolution, and under fears of a refusal, I was carried out to be more peremptory than usual as to the success. Yea, now, when I was in the most submissive frame, I was more peremptory as to the event, than when my heart was most eagerly set upon it.

8. Jan. 17th, 1701, was a day set apart by us both, to be kept with fasting and prayer, for obtaining a blessing on our marriage. I began it with prayer, wherein I endeavoured to trace back sin to my very infancy. Lord, I have been in all sin: not one of thy commands but I have broken in almost all instances; save in the outward acts, and from them, O Lord, only thy free grace restrained me.

I now again solemnly devoted myself to Him, in this new relation I was to enter upon; beseeching that he would not contend with either of us for the sins of our single life; that he would make us holy, and bless us in this new state, fitting us every way for one another. In my second address to God by prayer, he gave me much sweetness and enlargement (blessed be his goodness!) in reference to that particular for which I set apart this day. When "he prepareth our hearts to pray, his ear hearkeneth thereto."

This day I again searched into my state, and found these evidences of the Lord's work in my soul: (1.) He hath given me by his Spirit some discovery of the innumerable sins of every period of my life, and especially of the root of all, the inexpressible corruption of my nature. (2.) He has discovered to me the vanity of all those reliefs nature leads to, with regard to the guilt of sin; he hath made me see that my own works cannot save me, and I hope taken me off from resting upon them; for under trouble, occasioned by sin, nothing but Christ could quiet me: the view of my own works only increased it. And God, when he assisted me most therein, so guarded me against this, that he then always opened my eyes to see a world of sin in them; insomuch that I have as earnestly desired to be saved from my best duties as ever I did from my worst sins: and whenever my heart inclined to lay some stress on duties spiritually performed, God stirred up in my soul a holy jealousy over my heart in this particular. (3.) As to the power of sin, he hath brought me to an utter despair of relief from my own prayers, vows, or resolutions. (4.) He hath been pleased to determine me to choose the Gospel way of salvation, by resting on Christ for righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, as a way full of admirable mercy and wisdom; a way of great peace and security to sinners, and best suited to give glory to God. Upon these grounds I conclude,

that the Lord hath wrought faith in me, and will complete my salvation; and because he hath determined me to choose him, therefore I dare call him my God, my Saviour, my Sanctifier.

On January 23d, 1701, he was accordingly married at Edinburgh, to Janet Watson, daughter to Mr. David Watson, of St. Andrew's. By her he had nine children, three sons and six daughters, of whom one son and five daughters survived him.

9. In March, 1705, his then youngest child fell into a languishing illness, concerning whom he writes thus: "April 11th, my child died: blessed be God, I have had a child to give at his call; and blessed be the Lord, that he helped me to give her willingly."

In March, 1712, his son George fell ill: I had often, says he, given all my children up to God; and now it pleased him to try me in the tenderest point, whether I would stand to my resignation. I could not find freedom in asking for his life, but much in crying for mercy for him. Yet I cannot say but the burden was great upon me, till communing with a friend about the state of the church and religion, concern for God's interest got the ascendant over that for my own, and from that time I found comfort: and the nearer he was to his end, the more loosed I was from him, and the more cheerful was my resignation; so that before his death, prayers were almost made

up of praises, and he was set off with thanksgiving.

CHAPTER III.

1. The place of Professor of Divinity in the university of St. Andrew's being vacant in December, 1702, Her Majesty's patent was procured for him; upon which he made the following reflection:—"This seems to be of the Lord, for it was without so much as a thought in me; yet were all obstructions removed, all attempts for others crossed, and my spirit so held that I durst not oppose it, but was obliged to submit to the desires of those who were the most competent judges."

2. Accordingly, April 26th, 1710, he was by the Principal of the college admitted into his professorship. But he enjoyed little health in that office; for in the beginning of April, 1711, he was suddenly seized with a violent pleurisy, which obliged his Physicians to take from him a great quantity of blood; and although he was relieved from the disease, he never recovered his strength, by reason of the indisposition of his stomach, and frequent vomitings. Hereupon ensued, in the following winter, a coldness, swelling, and stiffness in his legs, with frequent and very painful cramps. But besides his bodily illness, the grievances of the Church did not a little add to his trouble; espe-

cially the imposing the oath of abjuration upon Ministers, which he feared might have fatal effects, from the difference of their sentiments concerning the lawfulness of it. His advice upon it was, that, after all due information, every one should act according to the light he had. But what he most of all inculcated was, that their differing about the meaning of an expression therein, gave no just ground for any alienation of affection, much less for separation, either amongst Ministers or people.

CHAPTER IV.

1. On Wednesday, Sept. 17th, (and some days preceding,) he was under great trouble of mind; and a friend asking him that morning how he had rested in the night, he answered, "Not well. I have been this night sore tossed with thoughts of eternity. I have been thinking on the *terribilia Dei*,* and all that is difficult in death to a Christian. All my enemies have been round about me. I had a great conflict, and faith was like to fail. O that I may be kept now in this last trial, from being an offence to his people!"

In the afternoon when some of his brethren visited him, he said, "I am but young and of little experience, but this death-bed now makes me old;

* That is, the terrible things of God.

therefore I use the freedom to exhort you to faithfulness in the Lord's work. You will never repent this. He is a good Master. I have always found him so. If I had a thousand lives, I should think all too little to be employed in his service."

2. Thursday, Sept. 18th, being asked in the morning how he was, he said, "O what a terrible conflict had I yesterday! but now I may say, 'I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith.' Now he hath put a new song in my mouth. Praise, praise is comely for the upright. Shortly I shall have another sight of God than ever I had, and be more fit to praise him than ever. O the thoughts of an incarnate God are sweet and ravishing! And O how do I wonder at myself that I do not love him more! that I do not admire him more! O that I could honour him! What a wonder I enjoy such composure under these pains, and in view of approaching death! O what a mercy that I have the use of my reason, till I have declared his goodness to me!"

To his wife he said, "He came to me in the third watch of the night, walking upon the waters, and he said to me, 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end: I was dead, and am alive, and live for evermore, and have the keys of death and hell.' He stilled the tempest of my soul, and there is a sweet calm."

When desired to be tender of his health, he said, "I will strive to last as long as I can. I have

no more to do with my time, but to tepe it out* for the glory of God." Then he said, "'I shall see my Redeemer stand on the earth at the last day.' But before then I shall see the Lamb in the midst of the throne. O it will be a glorious company, 'the spirits of just men made perfect,' and Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant! O for grace! grace to be patient to the end!"

Then he desired a Minister to pray.

After prayer he called for a little water to wash his eyes, and said, "I hope to get them washed shortly, and made like doves' eyes; and then farewell sin, farewell sorrow!"

Then taking some refreshment, he said, "I get sleep from him, and food from him; and I shall get himself. 'My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.'"

Seeing his youngest child, he said to her, "Mady, my dear, the Lord bless you; 'the God of your father, and my father, bless you; the God that fed me all my life, the Angel that redeemed me from all evil, bless you,' and the rest, and be your portion: that is a good heritage, better than if I had crowns and sceptres to leave you. My child, I received you from him, and I give you to him again."

To his wife he said, "My dear, encourage yourself in the Lord: he will keep you, though you

* That is, spend it thriftily.

even fall into enemies' hands." And then declaring his willingness to part with his dearest relations, he said, "This is the practice of religion, to make use of it when we come to the pinch: this is a lesson of practical divinity."

When the Physician came, he said, "Doctor, as to this piece of work, you are near at an end of it. God be with you, and persuade you to be in earnest: I return you thanks for your diligence. Is my pulse low? I am well pleased it is. I would have been content to have been away long ere now: a few more strokes, and victory, victory for ever, through the Captain of our salvation!

"Now get acquaintance with God. The little acquaintance I have had with God, within these two days, has been better than ten thousand times the pains I have been at all my life about religion. It is good to have him to go to, when we are turning our face to the wall. He is known in Sion for a sure refuge, a very present help in trouble.

"What a strange hardness is in the hearts of men! But whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, it is our duty to speak; and when we are dead and gone, what we spoke in the name of the Lord may take hold of them."

To his eldest child, he said, "Ah, Margaret, you seem sometimes to have convictions from God. Beware of them: they are the most dangerous

things you ever meddled with. Each of them is God's messenger; and if you despise the messenger of God, he will be avenged of you."

To a Minister who came in, he said, "I am waiting for the salvation of God." He answered, "If the Lord would spare you, it would be mercy to this place." He replied, "What can a poor wretch signify? I could do nothing: I signify nothing. But I will tell you, brother, what I have thought of long: I fear, from the taking off of the servants of God at this time, that there is like to be a general overflowing consumption, running over not only this, but all the Reformed churches."

To the Apothecary he said, "Study religion in youth: when you come to be as I am, you will find no comfort without it. I give you this as a solemn warning from God: if you come to be hardened by the frequent sight of men in my state, you may come to be hardened for ever."

To three Ministers he said, "My dear brethren, it is purely from a sincere love to you, that I presume to say, when God helped me to diligence in studying and meditating, I found him then remarkably shining upon me. There is nothing to be had with a slack hand. You are in an evil day. However, be faithful, and God will strengthen you for his own work, if you are faithful therein. You cannot, it is true, bring all persons to the Lord; but you may make their consciences, will they, nill they, speak for the Lord.

"I repent," continued he, "I did not do more for Him; but I have peace in it; what I did, I did in sincerity: He accepts of the mite. It was the delight of my heart to preach the Gospel, and it made me sometimes neglect a frail body. I desired to decrease that the Bridegroom might increase, and to be nothing that he might be all. And I rejoice in his highness.

"Brethren, this is encouragement for you to try and go farther. Alas! I have gone no length; but would fain have gone farther: 'the hand of the diligent maketh rich.' Much study, much prayer, temptations also, and distinct deliverances from temptations, are useful helps. I was fond enough of books; but I must say, what God let me see of my ill heart was of more use than all my books." One said, "This is to believe, and therefore to speak." He replied, "The Lord help me to honour him: I desire no more. O that I had the tongues of men and angels to praise him! I hope shortly to get will to answer my duty, and ability to answer my will. O to be helped so, and to fear always! How soon should I fall if he withdrew! But do not stumble, Sirs, though I should be shaken. The foundation standeth sure."

When advised to be quiet a little, he said, "How should a man bestow his last breath, but in commending the Lord Jesus Christ, God clothed in our nature dying for our sins?" And when again pressed to be tender of his body, he said,

"O but my heart is full!" And then desiring a Minister to pray for him, he said, "Pray that God may have pity on a weak thing, that is not able to bear much in the conflict!"

To two other Ministers he said, "Above all scan your own hearts, and make use of what discoveries you get there, to enable you to dive into consciences, to awaken hypocrites, and to separate the precious from the vile; and to do it with that accuracy and caution, as not to make sad the hearts which God hath made glad!

"With respect to the difference which this oath is like to make among Ministers, with the greatest earnestness I say, whenever it begins, remember difference is a hot thing; there must be condescension, tenderness, and forbearance. We must not fly at the ball. Whatever apprehensions I have of some Ministers not acting conscientiously, and preaching in such a way as may do hurt, yet I would speak tenderly and act tenderly toward them. Let there be much of the forbearance and meekness that is in Jesus. Follow peace: peace is worth much: wound not our church among her enemies. The deadly evil, which I fear will ruin all, is coldness and indifferency. Many seem to try how far they may go without being lost; but the Christian's rule is to stand at a distance."

To him who had succeeded him in the parish of Ceres he said, "That people were my choice, to whom with much peace and pleasure I preached,

as I could, though not as I should, the Gospel of Christ. Though I own that in all things I have sinned exceedingly before the Lord, yet I have peace, in that with much concern I aimed at leading them to the Lord Jesus. Tell them, that I die rejoicing in the faith and profession of what I often preached to them under a low state of body. Tell them, that the Gospel I preached to them, if they receive it not, will be a witness against them. We are, like our Master, set out for the fall and rising again of many. And if we can do no more, yet if we be faithful, they shall know that a Prophet hath been among them."

In the night-time he said, "This growing weakness of my eyes is a sign of a change approaching. If he shut my eyes, he will open my eyes; eyes no more to behold vanity. But I shall behold him in righteousness; and when I awake, I shall be satisfied with his likeness."

Afterwards he said, "If this be the last day of my conflict, I would humbly desire of the Lord, that he would condescend to be tender to one that loves his appearing: that as he has dealt wonderfully with me hitherto, so he may deal tenderly with me even to the end, in loosing the pins of my tabernacle, and helping me to honour him by a composed resignation of myself into his hands."

Finding some sweat on his face, he said, "I fancy a greater change is near. I can compose myself, I bless his name. I know not how it

comes to pass, that one who has met with so much of God should be so unthankful as to doubt him in the least! O what an evil heart of unbelief have I! O that I should yet have such an enemy in my bosom!"

When one said, "Sir, I think you have need of rest;" he answered, "I have no need of rest, were it not to put me in case to finish my course with joy. Lo, here is the power of Christ's death, and the efficacy of his resurrection! I find the advantage of One at the right hand of God, who is able to save to the uttermost! That is the sight I long for: he will but shut my eyes, and open them in glory. To have my soul entirely submissive to him in all things, that is my desire. And so it will be shortly; then never will there be a reluctant thought, never one more estranged thought from God!"

To one who asked if he was not faint, he answered, "I am not faint; I am refreshed as with wine. O there is a sweet calm in my soul! My desires are towards him, and the remembrance of his name. Remember him! Why should not I remember him that remembered me in my low condition? He passed by, and said, Live! And when he says, he gives life."

He then desired to have read the former part of the first chapter of the second epistle to the Corinthians. And after the 9th and 10th verses were read, "We had the sentence of death in

ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raised the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;" he said, "Now there it is all. God hath delivered me, and I trust that he will deliver me, and bruise Satan shortly under my feet, and I shall get the victory over the cunning world, and the deceitful heart. Many a weary day have I had with my unbelief! If I had had faith to believe things not seen, to believe that my happiness lay not in things temporal, but eternal; if I had had faith's abiding impression realizing these things, I should not have known how to abide out of heaven a moment."

When he was desired to sleep, he answered, "Those I am going to sleep not day or night, but cry, Holy, holy, holy! They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, and mount up with wings as of an eagle. I cannot get my heart in a right tune, as I would have it; but it will be so in a short time." After he had lain still a little, one said, "You have not slept." He answered, "No; I had much work; but, blessed be God! pleasant work."

Afterwards, when his wife asked how he was, he said, "My dear, I am longing for the salvation of God, and hastening to it." Then seeing her very sad, he said, "My dear, encourage yourself: here is a body going to clay, and a soul

going to heaven, where I hope you are to come."

3. Friday, Sept. 19th.—About five in the morning, when he was desired to try if he could sleep, he answered, "No, no: should I lie here altogether useless? Should not I spend the last of my strength to show forth his glory? He then held up his hands, which were much swelled, and said, "Lame hands, and lame feet! But see a lame man leaping and rejoicing."

Feeling some pain, he said, "This is one of the forerunners of the change, the great change. O when shall I be admitted to see the glory of the higher house? instead of that clouded night of a created sun, to see that clear and perfect glory!"

After some time's silence, he took leave of his wife and children, saluting and speaking to them all, one by one. Then he said, "A kind and affectionate wife you have been to me. The Lord bless you, and he shall bless you." To a Minister that came in, he said, "Brother, I am upon a piece of trying work. I am parting with my wife and children. I am resolved, I bless his name; though I have had one of the best of wives, yet she is no more mine, but the Lord's."

Then to his son he said, "God bless the lad, and let my name be named upon him. But, O, what is my name? Let the name of the Lord be named upon him. Tell the generation following, how good God is, and hand down this testimony."

After that he spoke to his servants, and said, "My dear friends, make religion your business. I charge you all, beware of graceless masters; seek to be with them that fear the Lord."

Then he said, "Here is a demonstration of the reality of religion; that I, a poor, weak, timorous man, once as much afraid of death as any; I that have been many years under the terrors of death, come now, in the mercy of God, and by the power of his grace, composedly and with joy to look death in the face. I have seen it in its paleness, and in all its circumstances of horror. I dare look it in the face in its most ghastly shape, and hope within a while to have the victory."

He then said to some Ministers, "My brethren, I have been giving up my wife and children to God. I am upon the wing for eternity; but, glory to God, I know in whom I have believed."

Then he said, "Dear brethren, will you speak a word to one that longs to hear of Him? O I love to hear the Gospel, I love to preach: it is a joyful sound, a sweet sound. I love to hear of His name. His name is as ointment poured forth. I love to live preaching Christ; and I love to die preaching Christ."

After that he said, "Brethren, I take this opportunity to acknowledge your tenderness to me, who am most unworthy of it in many respects. I can say, I desired to live in love with you, and bless God there was harmony among us. The

Lord bless you, and your labours; the Lord himself multiply blessings on you and your families, and support you against all discouragements." Then to one of them he said, "My dear friend, show kindness to my dear wife and children. I recommend her to your care: she has been the friend of my bosom, the wife of my youth, a faithful friend." Afterward he said, "Let patience have its perfect work. My soul longs more than they that wait for the morning. Lord Jesus, make haste, until the day break, and the shadows flee away."

4. After this, at his desire, a paper was read over, which he had dictated some days before. This he owned before several witnesses, and desired them to attest it. The tenor whereof follows:—

"Having before so disposed of my worldly concerns, as I judged expedient for my family; I thought myself bound, moreover, by this latter will, to declare my sentiments as to religion; being, through the mercy of God, in the full and composed exercise of my reason, although very weak in body.

"First, then, I acknowledge, I came into the world a defiled branch of apostate Adam, under the guilt of his sin, and tainted with the pollution of sin derived from him; having a heart full of alienation from, and enmity against, God: in a word, a child of wrath, an heir of hell. And long did I follow the bent of this corrupt nature,

going on from ill to worse: indeed I had ruined myself, and could do nothing for my own recovery; and must have been everlastingly lost, if God in tender mercy had not looked upon me.

"I must, on the other hand, bless God, who cast my lot in a land where the Gospel of Christ is revealed; who so ordered it, that I was born of religious parents, and by them was seriously devoted to him. And whereas I early subjected myself to other lords, I adore God that by his word and his Spirit he ceased not to strive with me, until, in the day of his power, he made me cheerfully return to the God of my fathers.

"I bless God that, when I stood trembling under the terrors of his law, he seasonably snatched me from despair, by discovering the blessed way of salvation for self-destroyed sinners through a dying Saviour. It is he alone who must answer for me. Without him I am undone. On him, the efficacy of his sufferings, the power of his resurrection, and of his whole mediation, as revealed in the Gospel, do I build all my hope.

"I bless God that he ever honoured such a sinful, unworthy worm, to preach the glorious Gospel of his Son. I confess I have but ill managed this glorious trust, but have been a sinner in all I did exceedingly. Yet so far as I know my own heart, it was the life of my life to preach Christ crucified; nor durst I deal coldly and indifferently in a matter wherein I knew depended both my

own and my hearers' salvation. And I must bear testimony to my Master, that he never bade me go any part of my warfare upon my own charges. If I was straitened, it was 'in my own bowels;' but when I freely gave, when I had freely received, I never wanted seed for sowing, and bread for the eater, nor (I hope) a blessing.

"I desire to join my insignificant testimony to that of the glorious cloud of witnesses, that 'the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;' that the way of holiness is the way of pleasantness and peace, and the ordinances of the Gospel are the effectual means of communion and fellowship with the Father and the Son.

"Indeed, all in God's way, and in his word, is glorious, honourable, and like himself: he needs none of our testimonies; but it is the least we can do to celebrate his praises. I therefore, being in some sense obliged, take this solemn occasion, before all the world, to acknowledge these among many other obligations I have received from him; and to bequeath, as my last legacy to my family, this pious advice,—to choose the Lord for their God: for he hath been my father's God, the God both of my wife's predecessors and mine. We hope he hath been our God; and I recommend him to my children, solemnly charging them, as they will answer it at the last day, to make it their first care, to seek peace with God, and reconciliation

through Christ crucified; and, being reconciled, to make it their perpetual study to please him in all things. It is my repeated charge to you all, Follow God; follow him early, follow him fully. I have often devoted you, as I could, to God; and there is nothing I have so much at heart as to have this stand, that ye may indeed be the Lord's. O that God himself may determine your tender hearts to seek him early, and he will be a good portion, and see well to you.

"As for my body, I commit it to the dust, under the care of the Keeper of Israel; expecting and hoping, that that quickening Spirit, who is the Spirit of the head, and actuates all the members of his mystical body, will, in due time, quicken my mortal body: and for my spirit, I commit it unto the Lord Jesus, with whom I have entrusted it long ago; and I will resign it with Stephen, crying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.'

"THOMAS HALIBURTON."

5. Soon after he said, "I confess God has been beating me in a mortar this long time; but he has been doing much work. My soul is even as a weaned child. I am loosed from all my enjoyments. My heart is disengaged even from my dearest wife and children; but I have put them in a good hand."

To a friend he said, "There is a sweet composure in the Lord. The beams of the house are as goodly cedar. I am laying down my tabernacle

to resume it again. O for grace to be faithful unto death! After we have gone through many things, we have still need to wait on God till the last. For 'he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.'".

Then he said to the Physician, "I fancy my feet are growing cold: yea, all the parts of this body are going to ruin. You may believe a man stepping into eternity. I am not acting as a fool. I have weighed eternity this night. I have looked on death in every circumstance that is terrible to nature. And under the view of all these, I found that in the way of God there is not only a rational satisfaction, but a power that engages and rejoices the heart. I have narrow thoughts: I am like to be overwhelmed, and I know not where I am, when I think on what I am to be, and what I am to see. I have long desired and prayed for it."

Some time after he said, "O Sirs, I dread mightily that a rational sort of religion is coming in among us; a religion that consists wholly in moral duties and ordinances, without 'the power of godliness,' a way of serving God which is mere Deism, having no relation to Jesus Christ and the Spirit of God."

To a Minister that came from Edinburgh he said, "Come, and see your friend in the best case you ever saw him in, longing for a deliverance, and hasting to the coming of the day of God. I sent for you, to encourage you to preach the Gos-

pel in an ill world, and to stand by Christ, who hath been so good to me. This is the best pulpit that ever I was in. I am now laid on this bed for this end, that I may commend my Lord."

6. Saturday, Sept. 20th.—In the morning, when a Minister asked how he was, he answered, "I am composed, waiting for Him." He replied, "You see how kindly he deals with you: he gives you both heavenly exercise and heavenly enjoyments: he deals so tenderly with you, that you have little more to do but to praise." He answered, "I have reason to desire the help of all to praise him. Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, magnify his holy name!"

To some entering the room he said, "You are all very welcome. I am taking a little wine for refreshment. In a while I shall have new wine in the kingdom of his glory. I dare scarce allow my thoughts to fix directly upon it. I must look aside, lest I be overwhelmed. But I must speak of Him who hath done wonderful things for me, and kept me in a perfect calm. Verily, light is sown for the upright, and gladness for the true of heart. O when shall I conceive aright of glory! I cannot order my speech now, because of darkness. I long to behold it, but I will wait till He comes. I have experienced much of his goodness since I lay on this bed. I have found that tribulation worketh experience, and experience patience, and patience hope. And I have found the

love of God shed abroad in my soul." Then turning to his wife, he said, "My dear, encourage yourself in the hope, that, under the conduct of the same Captain of salvation, you will come hither also. Cast yourself and your family upon the Lord. Encourage yourself: God liveth. Blessed be my Redeemer, the rock of my salvation!"

Then he said, "Who is like unto him? O what has he allowed me this night! I know now the meaning of that, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, ye shall receive it.' The Lord hath even allowed me to be very minute in every circumstance. Many a day have I feared how I should get through the valley of the shadow of death; but now I fear not. Blessed be God, who since I lay down here hath carried on a work of sanctification far in my soul, that makes me meet for heaven! Young as I am, I die old and satisfied with days. The child is going to die, an hundred years old. I am like a shock of corn fully ripe. But O, I have been under a bright sun, in a day when the Sun of righteousness shone, and I have had glorious showers."

After a little silence, he said, "I have slept, and am refreshed. And now what shall I say? I can say no more to commend the Lord; not for want of matter, but of words. Well, Sirs, you will meet with difficulties; but this may encourage you: you see God own his servants, and should not his

servants own him, and despise what his enemies can do against them? God has kept my judgment for the best piece of work I ever had. O what of God do I see! I never saw any thing like it. The beginning and end of religion are wonderfully sweet." One said, "God's dealings with you have been very uncommon." He answered, "Very uncommon indeed, if you knew all that I know. But therein is the excellency of his power seen, in that he maketh the weak strong."

A while after he said to those about him, "O this is the most honourable pulpit I was ever in! I am preaching the same Christ, the same holiness, the same happiness, I did before. I have much satisfaction in that. I am not ashamed of the Gospel I have preached. I was never ashamed of it all my days, and I am not ashamed of it at the last. Here am I, a weak man, in the hands of the king of terrors, rejoicing in hope of the glory that shall be revealed; and that by the death and resurrection of a despised Christ. When the beginning of this trouble was upon me, I aimed, as my strength would allow, at that, 'Show me some token for good;' and, indeed, I think God hath showed me a token for good."

Then perceiving his spirits faint, he said, "Come, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit, fluttering within my breast like a bird to be out of the snare. When shall I hear him say, 'The winter is past; arise, my love, and come away!' Come and

take me by the hand, that I stumble not in the dark valley of death!"

Then he desired a Minister to pray; and after prayer said, "Lord, I wait for thy salvation. I wait as the watchman watcheth for the morning. I am weary with delays! O why are his chariot-wheels so long a coming? I am sick of love; I am faint with delay."

Then he said, "Draw the curtains about me, and let me see what he has a mind to do with me." And after awhile, "Whence is this to me? There is a strange change within this half hour. Ah, I am like to be shipwrecked to health again. O what a sort of providence is this! I was in hopes to have been at my journey's end, and now I am detained by a cross wind. I desire to be patient under his hand; but he must open my heart to glorify him. O pray for me; pray for me; that none who fear him may be ashamed on my account."

To the Apothecary he said, "I thought to have been away; but I am come back again. I was glad to be gone; yet I am not wearied. He has not allowed a fretting thought. My pain is great; but I am enabled to bear it. O I am a monument, a monument of the power of God. My great desire has been these many years to suffer for the truth of our religion. And now God has given me the greatest honour, to be a living witness to it. I am a monument that we

have not followed cunningly devised fables. I shall be at heaven shortly, by the word of my testimony, and the blood of the Lamb." Then to a citizen he said, "There are but a few names in this place, that set their faces heavenward. But be you encouraged to go on. You have been a kind neighbour: the Lord bless you and your family. They that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. Here is an evidence of it. Last winter I thought I was going to be cast out as a withered branch; and now the dead stock that was cut has budded again, and grown a tall cedar in Lebanon."

Then he said to the Ministers, "I desire to hear the word read, the word preached. Many times when I thought on the worthies of old, I said, I was born out of due time: but now I think I am born in due time; for I shall see Jesus! Jesus that delivers from the wrath to come. I shall see Elijah and Moses, the great Old-Testament Prophets. I shall see the two great Mediators, the type and the antitype. The three disciples got a glorious sight of Christ in his transfiguration, to confirm their faith against the objections of the unbelieving. Was he despised as a mere man, and his Godhead disowned? Lo, here he appears in divine majesty and glory! Did they say he was against the law? Lo, here Moses, by whom the law was given, adoring him. Did they say, he was not the Messiah foretold by the Pro-

phets? Lo, here Elijah, the most zealous of them, owning and honouring him. Was he reproached as a deceiver of the people? Lo, the voice from heaven saith, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him.' Yet this sight was of short continuance. But in heaven we shall have an abiding sight. We shall then behold his glory; and we shall be like unto him: for we shall see him as he is.

"O! I am full of matter! I know not where to begin or end. The Spirit of the Lord hath been mighty with me! O the book of God is a strange book! It is written within and without. I never studied it to the half of what I should: but now God hath given me much of it together. Never was I more uneasy in my life: and yet I was never more easy. All my bones are ready to break; my hand is a burden to me; and yet all is easy!"

Then to his wife he said, "O my sweet bird, are you there? I am no more yours; I am the Lord's. I remember on the day I took you by the hand, I thought on parting with you. But I knew not how to get my heart off of you again: yet now I have got it done. Will you not give me to the Lord, my dear?"

Then seeing her very sad, he said, "My dear, do not weep; you should rather rejoice: rejoice with me, and let us exalt his name together. I shall be in the same family with you; but you

must stay a little behind, and take care of God's children."

When awakened out of sleep, he said, "I am now hand in hand, grappling with my last enemy: and I find he is a conquerable enemy; yea, I am more than conqueror." One said, "A strange champion indeed!" He answered, "I! not I, but the grace of God that is in me. By the grace of God, I am what I am; and the God of peace hath bruised Satan under my feet. I have often wondered how the martyrs could clap their hands in the fire: I do not wonder at it now. I could clap my hands, though you held burning candles to them, and think it no hardship, though the flames were going about them. And yet, were the Lord withdrawn, I should cry, and not be able to bear it, if you but touched my foot."

7. Sunday, September 21st.—About three in the morning he said, "And is it the Sabbath then? This is the best Sabbath I ever had. On a Sabbath night my George went to his rest: I bestowed him on God, blessed be his name! and he made me content. I would have given him all my children that way; and I hope it shall be so: blessed be his name!"

After a little pause he said, "Shall I forget Sion? Then let my right hand forget her cunning. O, to have God returning to his church, and his work going on in the world! If every drop of my blood, every atom of my body, every

hair of my head, were men, they should all go to the fire, to have this going on."

After that he said, "I could not believe, that I could have borne, and borne cheerfully, this rod so long. This is a miracle,—pain without pain. Blessed be God that ever I was born! I have a father, a mother, and ten brethren and sisters in heaven, and I shall be the eleventh. O blessed be the day that ever I was born! O if I were where He is! And yet for all this, God's withdrawing from me would make me as weak as water. All which I enjoy, though it be miracle upon miracle, would not make me stand without new supplies from God. The thing I rejoice in is, that God is altogether full, and that in Jesus Christ there is all the fulness of the Godhead."

Then to his wife he said, "O wait upon him; for he is a good God to all that serve him. He never takes any thing from them, but he gives them as good or better back again. My dear, we have had many a sweet day together: we must part for awhile; but we shall meet again, and shall have one work, the praises of God, and the praises of the Lamb!"

Then to some present he said, "Do you think that He will come and receive the prisoner of hope to-day? Whether He do it or no, he is holy and righteous; yet, I confess, I long for it. I do not tire: but the hireling longs for his wages. If in

His adorable wisdom he try me further, holy and reverend is his name; he is not wanting to me. I desire only grace to be faithful unto death, until I come to the land of praises, to thy gates, O Jerusalem, to give thanks to the name of the God of Jacob."

Then a Minister asking if he should pray, he answered, "Yea, yea, pray for me." And after prayer, he said, "This night my skin has burned, my heart has panted, my body has been bruised, and there is a sore upon me that is racking my spirit; and yet I cannot say, but the Lord still holds me in health in the midst of all. If he should please to continue me years in this case, I have no reason to complain." One said, "No hypocrite is able, in such a condition, to counterfeit such language." He answered, "It is as great a wonder to me, as to any about me. Brother, I know not whether I may desire you to beg of the Lord, with respect to this poor body to shorten my trial, if it be his will: the hireling longs for his wages; but I have reason to do it with submission.

"I long for a deliverance from the remainders of a body of sin. But if God lengthens my trouble, then why not? Righteous is his name. I know not what alteration may be. I confess, I am like a bird on the wing: and I would fain be at Immanuel's land, where the tree of life is.

"Well, all this is encouragement to you, to

acquaint yourselves with God. All these soft clothes are like sackcloth to me; and yet I have perfect ease of spirit. My breast and my stomach are drawn all together, as it were with cords; and yet the mercy of God keeps me composed. What is this? I could scarce have believed, even though I had been told, that I could have kept in the right exercise of my judgment under this racking pain. Whatever come of it, this is a demonstration that there is a reality in religion; and I rejoice in this, that God hath honoured a sinful worm, so as to be a demonstration of his grace. My dear friends, while I live I must preach the Gospel. He has given me a while yet here, which ought to be reckoned precious; and so long as it lasts, my work is still to commend him. The word speaks, providence speaks in me: despise not the Gospel under this new discovery. I am a sinner; shame belongs to me: worthy is the Lamb to receive glory."

To two Ministers who stayed with him while the rest went to church, he said, "If my head would bear it, I would fain hear singing. I do not find any change, and God has in some measure taken away my inclination to limit him as to the hour." He then joined in singing the latter part of the eighty-fourth Psalm; and after singing said, "I always had a mistuned voice, and which is worse, a mistuned heart; but when I join the temple service above, there

shall not be one string of the affections out of tune."

To some that came from church he said, "You have been in the assembly of God's people, wherein communion with the Father and Son may be attained. These enjoyments are some of the most valuable to be had here, and the way to the rest which remaineth for the people of God. O how amiable are thy tabernacles even here! But how much more so above, where there is the eagle's eye, that can see the glorious light, even the light of the Lord!"

Then to the Ministers he said, "When this trouble began, I expected no smile from God. I thought, if I could steal away, creeping with terrors, to be plunged into eternity with a peradventure, it was fair. But he hath taken me out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock. I am nothing, less than nothing, a vile sinner; but mercy does all."

In the night he caused the Songs of Degrees to be read; and said, "These psalms are so called, say some, because they were sung on the steps of the stairs that led up to the temple. And what fitter to be read to a poor sinner, that aims at climbing up the hill of God, where the great temple of God is?"

8. Monday, September 22d.—At half an hour past two, he asked what hour it was, and said, "Early in the morning my friends shall be ac-

quainted: for I expect this cough will hasten my deliverance. Well, well; I shall get out of the dark cloud; within a little I shall be in Abraham's bosom; yea, in His who carries the lambs in his bosom: and I am sure of goodness and mercy to follow me. O how good is He to a poor worm! Let us exalt his name together. It is the constant employ of all above, day and night. They see and sing; they have a clear vision. O when shall I see His face who is fairer than the sons of men! yea, who is brighter than the sun in his strength!"

To a Minister he said, "Could I have believed (but I am an unbeliever) that I could have had this pleasure in this condition? Once or twice Satan was assaulting my faith. I waked in a sort of carnal frame, and I thought I had lost my jewel; but now He will stand by me to the end. What shall I render to him? My bones are rising through my skin; and yet all my bones are praising him."

After struggling with a defluxion in his throat, he said, "This is a messenger from God to hasten me home. The other day I would have gone away without this glorious evidence of the grace of God. But this is more for my advantage, that I am thus tried and comforted. I said, Why are his chariot wheels so long a coming? But I will not say so any more. Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

Then he said, "If I should say that I would speak no more in the name of the Lord, it would be like a fire within my breast." And some looking at him as in amaze, he said, "Why look ye steadfastly on me, as though by might or power I were so? Not I, but the grace of God in me. It is the Spirit of God that supports me."

To his wife he said, "Be not discouraged, my dear, at the unavoidable consequences of nature. It is an evidence that there is but a very little time more, and death will be swallowed up in victory: the body will be shaken in pieces, and yet, blessed be God, my head is composed as it was before my sickness."

Then to some present he said, "My moisture is much exhausted this night; but the dew lies all night on my branches, the dew that waits not for man, nor tarries for the sons of men. O what cannot grace do! How have I formerly repined at the hundredth part of this trouble! O study the power of religion! It is the power of religion, and not the name, will give the comfort I find. I have peace in the midst of pain. And O how much of that I have had for a long time past! My peace has been like a river; not a discomposed thought. There have been some little suggestions, when my enemies joined in a league together, and made their great assault upon me. I had then one assault, and I was like to fall. But since the

Lord rebuked them, there is not a discomposed thought, but all is calm."

To a gentlewoman he said, "You are come to see your old dying friend; a wonder indeed, but a wonder of mercy. I am preaching still, and I would be content so to do, till these flesh and bones were wasted to nothing. The God of glory appeared to me, and the first sight I had of him was such as won my heart to him, so as it was never loosed. Many wanderings I have had, but I was never myself, till I went back to my centre again." He then rattled a little in his throat, and said, "This may be irksome to you; but every messenger of death is pleasant to me; and I am only detained here, that I may trumpet forth his praise a little longer."

About noon he said, "I was just thinking on the pleasant spot of earth I shall get to lie in, beside Mr. Rutherford, Mr. Forrester, and Mr. Anderson. I shall come in as the little one among them, and I shall get my pleasant George in my hand; and O we shall be a knot of bonny dust!" Then he said, "It will not be all my sore bones, that will make me weary yet (as long as God gives me judgment to conceive, and a tongue to speak) to preach his Gospel."

Then with the utmost warmth he broke out, "Strange! this body is sinking into corruption, and yet my intellectuals are so lively, that I cannot say there is the least alteration, the least decay of

judgment or memory. Such vigorous actings of my spirit toward God, and things that are not seen! But not unto us, not unto us; which I must have still on my heart, since cursed self is apt to steal the glory from God!"

Some time after he said, "Good is the will of the Lord. Every one of these throws is good; and I must not want one of them: I must not fly from my post, but stand as a sentinel; for this is my particular work. This would be hard work without Christ; but it is easy with him, for he is the Captain of my salvation."

He mentioned the pain in his head, but said, "In a battle there must be blood and dust. Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood. It is meet I should be so hard put to it, that I may know to whom I owe my strength. O that I were at the throne above, that my glimmering sight were taken away, that this unsteady faith might terminate in vision!"

Then he said, "If I am able, though I cannot speak, I will show you a sign of triumph, when I am near glory!"

To his wife he said, "My dear be not discouraged, though I should go away in a fainting fit. The Lord's way is the best way. I am composed. Though my body be vexed, my spirit is untouched."

One said, "Now you are putting your seal to that truth, that godliness is great gain. And I

hope you are encouraging yourself in the Lord." As a sign of it, he lifted up his hands and clapped them. And in a little time, about seven in the morning, he went to the land where the weary are at rest.

"O may I triumph so,
When all my warfare's past,
And dying find my latest foe
Under my feet at last.

"This blessed word be mine,
Just as the port is gain'd,
'Kept by the power of grace divine,
I have the faith maintain'd.'"

END OF VOLUME I.

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